

REACHING OUT

THE REPORT OF THE INDIAN AND
METIS EDUCATION CONSULTATIONS



March, 1985

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Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly

Member

February 1, 1985

Honourable Patricia Smith
Minister of Education
Legislative Building
REGINA, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Dear Minister:

In November of 1983, I had the privilege of being asked to carry out a province-wide consultation into the issue of Native education. The purpose of the consultation was to meet with those directly and indirectly involved in Native education to determine positive programming presently in place and shortfalls which may be inherent in our school system.

To carry out this mandate, I along with staff from Saskatchewan Education, Mr. Ken Horsman, Executive Director of Policy, Planning and Special Projects Division and Ms. Melona Palmer, Consultant, travelled the province from south to north. We held approximately 140 meetings with parents, students, teachers, trustees, directors of education, various interested groups and professionals involved in the area of Native education.

The process was most interesting and provided us with a personal view of what is taking place in this area. I am pleased to inform you that a common theme was evident in all our meetings. There was a genuine concern, a well of good will, an understanding that the issue of Native education merited special consideration and a willingness to do what is necessary to effect change.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my assistants for their dedication and commitment to the project.

May I also thank all those who so willingly came forward to meet with us, to express their views and opinions. It is hoped that this report reflects their concerns and provides the direction necessary to improve education for the Native students in our province.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with the findings and our recommendations.

Yours truly,

Arnold Tusa, M.L.A.
Last Mountain-Touchwood

Preface

In recent years, a serious situation has developed in Saskatchewan with respect to Indian and Metis education. Repeated requests from Indian and Metis groups and individuals for redirection and policy formulation have confirmed that Saskatchewan Native peoples are seeking a new and expanded role in the education of their children. In addition, educators and Native peoples are concerned about the current dropout rates which indicate most Indian and Metis children do not complete high school.

In response to this situation, the Minister of Saskatchewan Education, the Honourable Patricia A. Smith, commissioned a fact-finding consultation in January, 1984. The responsibility for heading the consultation process was given to Mr. Arnold Tusa, the Legislative Secretary for the Minister of Education, and MLA for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

The purpose of the Indian and Metis Education Consultations was to seek out the opinions, views and ideas of those directly involved with Indian and Metis education. The stated objectives were:

- To ask for comments on Indian and Metis education initiatives undertaken at the local level in order to determine which have been successful and why.
- To learn from local residents of special needs or problems to be addressed in the area of Indian and Metis education.
- To seek new ways to involve Indian and Metis parents in the education of their children.

The consultation was meant to be "grassroots" in nature. Approximately 140 meetings were held with parents, teachers, students, and school boards. As well, various special interest groups and professionals involved in the field of education were interviewed. Some of the groups asked to participate include directors of education, Native women's groups, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), the Association of Metis and Non-status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNIS), the Saskatchewan Urban Native Teacher Education Program (SUNTEP), Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP), Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP), the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF), and the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA).

The consultations were received enthusiastically, although in some cases with skepticism. However, a common element that was evident throughout the province in discussions with all groups and individuals was a "well" of good will and interest. The contents of this document are the findings resulting from the Indian and Metis Education Consultations — the problems, the ideas, and the possible solutions put forward by all groups.

Introduction

The consultation process was conducted through meetings and personal interviews organized in three phases. Phase I consisted of visits to several southern provincial schools and included meetings with parents, students, school trustees, school administrators, and teachers.

Phase II involved visits to Northern provincial schools and also included meetings with parents, students, school trustees, school administrators, and teachers. Meetings with special interest groups and individuals were carried out in Phase III of the consultation process.

The meetings were informal to encourage open communication. The participants were first given the opportunity to present their briefs and concerns. A schedule of structured questions was then used as a guide to ensure coverage of a range of common issues. The points discussed and recommendations presented were recorded in minutes of each meeting.

Following the consultation, collected material was organized on charts and the frequency of particular statements was identified. Topics of greatest concern became priority issues in the writing of the report.

Recommendations were compiled by groups (parents, teachers, etc) and can be found, along with a summary, at the end of each group's statement of issues. An analysis of the issues and recommendations was completed and a list of policy and program recommendations was developed on the basis of the analysis.

Chapter I

The Situation

Many barriers prevent some Indian and Metis students from succeeding in school. Until recently, the education system remained insensitive to their unique needs and a high dropout rate resulted. The problems are complex, but even to the casual observer it is apparent that Indian and Metis students have not been able to achieve their full potential in the present school system.

Approximately 50 percent of the Indian and Metis population is under 15 years of age. This, along with the relatively high birth rate common among Native peoples, means the number of Indian and Metis students in the province's schools is increasing. In addition, more Indian and Metis people are migrating into urban centers, and the number of Indian and Metis children in urban schools is increasing. A large number of children in Saskatchewan, then, have unique needs which are not being met.

Although the school system once viewed the needs of Indian and Metis children with insensitivity, lack of concern has been replaced by a commitment to address the complex problems which impede their success in school. A considerable number of programs have been instituted in recent years. The efforts have not been totally successful, but it is clear that present programming, while still inadequate, is making progress.

Educational issues are complicated by social and economic factors. The socio-economic conditions among much of Saskatchewan's Indian and Metis population remain serious. Poor health, inadequate education, low income, substandard housing, high rate of welfare dependency, high unemployment, high crime and delinquency rates, alcoholism, and frequent family and community breakdowns are found among Indian and Metis people as a result of poor economic conditions. Cultural and language differences, racism, and stereotyping pose additional obstacles which further alienate and exclude Native peoples from mainstream society.

It is these barriers that Indian and Metis students confront when attempting to obtain an education. Without programs designed to overcome the barriers, some Indian and Metis students are unable to meet the standards required of them in order to be successful in the school system.

The Consultations identified needs as articulated by parents, teachers, students, school boards, and organizations. A wide range of problems were discussed, but there was consensus among the groups that change is crucial.

The absence of open, honest, and clear communication was named as one of the major factors impeding success in school. Particularly in areas where there were only a handful of Indian and Metis graduates, both quantity and quality of communication between home and school appeared to be lacking. As a result, misunderstandings led to student feelings of alienation in the school. Problems were not resolved because few could identify the person responsible. It was suggested that improvement should begin with co-operation and communication between the home, the school, and the Indian and Metis community.

Parents, educators, and students all expressed concern with the current state of Indian and Metis education, and a diversity of solutions were presented for consideration. As a result, it became obvious that improvement in education for Indian and Metis students will require a wide range of policy and program measures.

Besides gathering information on problems that are evident, the Consultations collected information on Indian and Metis education initiatives undertaken at the local level. The discussions had two main outcomes. First, it was determined that communities with similar environments often had similar problems but with different degrees of intensity. Second, some communities displayed strengths that appeared to result from the implementing of a number of programs and innovations. These two outcomes are significant as they indicate that programs can make a difference and that something can be done to improve education for Indian and Metis students.

The following are examples of the program ideas that surfaced during the Consultations:

- To improve attendance, one band's education committee gave rewards of free milk for regular attendance and plaques for perfect attendance. This program proved to be effective.

- In one school, a special attempt was made to keep communication lines open. The band education committee and parents went freely to the school, and the principal felt free to visit the reserve and ask for assistance. When money was available, the band bought items for the school to benefit the children's education. If it appeared that a communication lacked clarity, steps were taken to correct the situation immediately.
- One band's education committee members gave up their per diems. The money was used for trips to provide school children with experiences they would not otherwise acquire.
- The teachers and principal of one school reported that they hold parent-teacher interviews in the band hall rather than at the school. Parent attendance at these interviews has greatly increased.
- At one school, the parents make soup and sell it at noon at cost price. This has proven to be effective in improving nutrition and has influenced the buying habits of many of the children.
- A Native teacher aide was employed by one school as a positive role model for the children. The teacher aide was able to relate to the children easily, and was considered an important part of their success.
- In one school, teachers agreed to take more students into their classes so that other teachers would have time to do work individually with students who need extra help.
- One school reported that parents and community members actively participate in the planning and initiation of cultural and extra-curricular activities. The response and attendance has been overwhelming.

Some schools reported that weaknesses and barriers in Indian and Metis education are evident. However, the fact that other schools overcame these same weaknesses and barriers proves that success is possible and that the problems are not insurmountable. Solutions do exist. With planning, co-operation, and continuity of programming, success can become more widespread.

Chapter II

Summary of the Consultations

The following is a summary of the comments made by the groups and individuals involved in the education of Indian and Metis children, along with their suggestions and recommendations to remedy the problems. The comments are organized according to a number of issues as identified by the groups consulted. Following the comments made by each group is a summary of their statements and the recommendations they presented. Involved in the consultation process were:

- Parents.
- Teachers, Principals, and Administrators.
- Students.
- School Boards.
- Groups and Organizations.

Comments from Parents

1. Curriculum

The parent groups identified curriculum as playing a vital role in the development of Indian and Metis education. Several aspects of curriculum were identified as important in future development.

Specifically these are:

Indian and Metis Content

The inclusion of Indian and Metis content as part of the core curriculum would serve a two-fold purpose. Indian and Metis students would receive a relevant and meaningful education, and non-Native students would become educated about Indian and Metis peoples.

Accuracy

Accurate, updated, and contemporary Indian and Metis curriculum was repeatedly stressed as being essential. Inaccuracy and romanticism has resulted in stereotyping, racism, and a loss of self-esteem of Indian and Metis students. Lifestyles of Indian and Metis peoples must be represented fairly in curriculum.

"There must be input into Curriculum from Native parents and educators. The Department of Education can develop a course using those books and make it compulsory. Throw out books that preach racism."

Involvement

Curriculum should be developed by Indian and Metis people in order to ensure validity. To develop a complete understanding of the perspective of Native peoples, teachers should attend inservice training sessions on how to correctly utilize Indian and Metis curriculum. The inservice must be developed and implemented by Indian and Metis people.

"In curriculum development we have no say and we would like to help draw it up about our own Native ancestry."

Materials and Resources

Parents felt that an adequate body of quality resource materials must be developed to accompany Indian and Metis curriculum. The materials must be competitive with other available resources on the market, particularly in terms of quality.

"There is a curriculum group at the local level and the Natives have not been asked to take part in it. We want to make recommendations and suggestions . . ."

Native Languages

Many parents saw Indian languages as an integral component of the core curriculum and felt that knowledge of an Indian language is fundamental to Indian and Metis culture and identity. Languages must be taught by qualified instructors using a standardized Indian language program.

"There are lots of local resources available but teachers don't take advantage of them. They assign Treaty 6 but don't do any real teaching with it."

Community Resources

Parents expressed a desire to see community members involved in the school. For example, it was thought that the police or a lawyer could provide Indian and Metis students with lectures on the law, citizens' rights, and legal processes

"We would like a Saulteaux instructor because our kids are losing their language."

Experiential Field Trips

Parents expressed concern that their children do not have the opportunity to leave the reserve or the community. Field trips which would give students a variety of experiences should be planned, with home and school working cooperatively to raise the required funds.

"We would like a Native Studies Social Studies program. Even if it is about the Cree and we are Saulteaux."

Testing

Parents felt that tests used for Indian and Metis students are culturally biased and, therefore, unfair. They saw the need for development of bias-free tests. Furthermore, parents stated the use of biased tests should be terminated. As well, a tool to identify gifted Indian and Metis students is required along with enrichment programming to meet their needs.

Reading

Parents felt their children have not acquired adequate reading skills. The need for remediation is great, even if special education funding must be provided.

Music Education

Music education was identified as a priority by some parents. It was felt that students need aesthetic education, but aren't receiving it at the present.

Early Intervention

Early childhood intervention was identified as a necessity for Indian and Metis children. Schools expect children to have had experiences which Indian and Metis children haven't had because of their different lifestyles. Early intervention was viewed as a possible means of retaining students and ensuring a higher level of success later in their school experience.

2. Parental Support

The second major issue that was unanimously agreed upon by parent groups was that more parental support is needed in the development of Indian and Metis Education. Areas lacking in parental support were identified as follows:

School Board Representation

A general consensus was that Indian and Metis parent representation should be mandatory on school boards. Parents have to be an integral part of the decision-making process. Plans should not be made about children's education without their parents' involvement.

Parents reported that they had experienced a variety of reactions when attempting to become involved at the school board level. Following are a few examples:

- One person ran for a place on the school division board and lost. The Indian and Metis people felt defeated and gave up.
- A Native representative at the local level felt his opinions and concerns were received with genuine interest and that something was done to accommodate needs.
- A Native representative at the local level felt his position was tokenism.

"We are being told that our students cannot cope with the material being presented, but why is the learning disability more specifically, reading disability--detected 9 or 10 years after they have begun school?"

"Start at nursery school to educate. As children get older they don't listen."

"We don't want to be a part of a school board; we want to deal one on one, as equals. We want to meet as two separate groups."

"We want to be part of the decision-making process."

"We are looking at getting someone in at the sub-division level. We are green now but in time we can handle it."

"We attended board meetings a few years ago but it didn't work out so we have given up."

- A Native person on a Division Board felt her input into the decision-making process was valid.
- A Native person at the Division Board level felt out-voted constantly and wanted to give up.
- A Native individual ran for Division Board representation and lost, but is planning strategies to get Native support to help win the seat next time.

Volunteer Work

Parents identified specific areas in which they could be involved in the daily events at school. They thought they could act as classroom volunteers and perhaps teach cultural activities, thus enriching the education of their children.

Parent Interest

Many parents felt that the schools are not receptive to them and, therefore, they are uncomfortable in approaching the school or the staff. The overall feeling was that schools alienate parents and provide only negative feedback. Many expressed the desire for positive communication with the schools.

Parents who experienced a negative reception at the school were asked about the development of this relationship. They explained that historically they had been totally excluded from the education and discipline of their children. Now, they are being requested to be active participants and they are insecure and unsure of their roles and responsibilities. Many parents felt the solution to the problem might lie in awareness classes for parents.

Parents also suggested that a liaison person could contribute much to bridge the existing communication gap between the school and the home. It was observed that, in areas where there is much parent interest and support, the home-school communication lines are open and positive dialogue occurs. Where parent interest and support is not as apparent, the home-school communication lines are closed.

The liaison person was seen as essential to initiating and maintaining communication by making home-school contacts, carrying out home visits, and generally checking on communication lines. Parents recommended that the liaison person be a local person, fluent in the local Indian language and dedicated to improving the educational environment and conditions for Indian and Metis children. That person could also work to educate parents, especially by clarifying parental roles in the education system and by providing instruction for parents with respect to participating in parent-teacher interviews.

"Our participation wasn't wanted. The reserve was talked about like we weren't even there."

"Question: Have Native representatives been asked to run for board representation?"

"Answer: No, we haven't asked them to run. They must approach us this time."

"We must encourage kids to go to school. Some kids' home lives are bad. They don't get any encouragement from home."

"There isn't enough parent support. Parents want the best for their kids but they don't understand the importance of education."

"Parents are uncomfortable at school. Schools shut parents out effectively. They say, 'Send us kids but don't bother us'."

"Our concern is communication-- we want schools to be receptive."

"Parents are wanting kids educated but kids can't see the importance of it."

"Culturally related projects have been done by the board; parents could be doing this. Parents are even interested in social studies. Trapping, etc., teach it to kids as we aren't passing it on."

"The key to getting parents involved is communication.... The teacher phoned me. I was doubtful. I had a lot of questions to ask first."

3. Teachers and Teacher Education

Parents identified teachers and teacher education as important aspects of Indian and Metis educational development.

Solutions presented by the parent groups included mandatory cross-cultural training for Indian and Metis and non-Native teachers. This experience was seen as crucial to improving Indian and Metis education. Parents stated that too many teachers are not equipped professionally to deal effectively with Indian and Metis students. It was stressed that teachers must understand where a child is coming from and why the child behaves in a particular manner in certain circumstances. In addition, teachers must be able to meet the needs of Indian and Metis students. Suggested methods of ensuring cross-cultural training for teachers included mandatory university classes as part of every teacher's program, and mandatory inservice training.

Some parents saw the need to prepare teachers for dealing with children who experience alcoholism at home. Poor attendance and other problems at school can be more clearly understood in the context of alcohol problems in the home. Glue sniffing was another major concern. Parents expressed a desire to attack this problem. The general consensus was that the school could have a significant impact by providing drug abuse awareness programs.

According to parents, classrooms and teachers are too cold and unresponsive. Learning in this type of environment is unlikely to occur. A warm, personalized atmosphere where students feel wanted and comfortable was seen as prerequisite to learning. In addition, teachers should be readily accessible and approachable.

Racism within the schools was identified as a very real problem, and attitude change was thought to be a high priority. Stereotyping and racism awareness seminars for educators and students were presented as one way of addressing the problem.

Because of a variety of conditions and circumstances, Indian and Metis children do not always have positive self concepts. Concern was voiced over lack of efforts to assist Indian and Metis students in building pride and self-esteem in their identity. Self concept development activities and a positive examination of Native peoples would benefit both Indian and Metis and non-Native students.

4. Indian and Metis Counsellors

Parent groups expressed the desire to see trained Indian and Metis counsellors in schools. Children need someone within the system they can relate to when they have problems and become frustrated. Parents felt Indian and Metis

"Parents aren't contacted often enough. They don't know what their kids are doing."

"Parents need education here. Right now, parents are defensive."

"As a parent and a teacher, I find it very difficult to believe that non-Indian and Native teachers without Indian and Native educational training can truly provide our unique students with a healthy school environment' of which the Minister's Advisory Committee is speaking. I see teachers not aware and not able to teach even if they are told to do it. It must come from the people, not from the government."

"Educate the teachers cross-culturally. So far we have only been a leg to help people to get a thesis. Talk integration in the classroom, not assimilation."

"Courses should be mandatory for teachers already teaching. They can't understand children's feelings unless they understand the Indian and Metis and local history."

"An assumption is that everyone gets three square meals a day. It is a myth. Teachers must know how to deal with kids that aren't, and deal with actions due to home situations."

"This school is a factory. There are no intra-school relationships. They are not looking at the child's emotional aspect."

counsellors would empathize with the students and aid them in overcoming their problems and frustrations. This would ultimately reduce the number of dropouts. Parents also saw a need for career counselling.

The hiring of a community counsellor was discussed as a means of providing education and awareness programming. Parents felt they needed counselling as well, and a local counsellor would be particularly beneficial in cases where people could not afford to travel to the city. Inservice training for these counsellors was recommended in cases where the counsellors were not trained as professionals.

5. Indian and Metis Role Models

Parent groups considered Indian and Metis role models in the school to be important for both students and parents. A positive image is provided when people of their own background are seen working in the system.

Employment of Indian and Metis teachers, teacher aids, career and guidance counsellors, and liaison workers would provide Indian and Metis people with the examples they need to realize they too can be employed in these types of positions. SUNTEP and NORTEP graduates were viewed as excellent role models.

On the other hand, it was pointed out that roles with negative connotations must be looked at more closely. The use of Indian and Metis teacher aides primarily as clerical "gofers" was viewed as detrimental to a positive image.

6. Stressing the Academic or the Non-Academic

Many parent groups stated that academics should not always be stressed. If children are unable to achieve in the mainstream of the system, there should be alternative courses available in technical/vocational areas to better meet their needs.

Other parents felt that the academic expectations for Indian and Metis students should remain the same as expectations for the non-Native students, but that the student teacher ratio should be lowered to give extra teacher time to Indian and Metis students. Parents felt much of the problem is due to students having poor English skills, and they wanted mechanisms by which language skills could be improved.

Many groups expressed the need for life skills training at the high school level, as well as family life classes which include sex education.

"We need compulsory professional Native counsellors so kids have someone to relate to. All of my kids dropped out and there were no counsellors. We have a school technician but she says counselling isn't her job."

"Fifteen years old seems to be a trying period; once over that, then kids do all right. Parent, teacher, and counsellor encouragement is needed at that age."

"Grades 7, 8, and 9 are tough. We need better counsellors. Career-wise too. They need to see a future."

"For role modelling, keep SUNTEP and NORTEP. They are excellent examples."

"There is a difference if a teacher is Native. The children respond naturally."

"We live to see our Indian and Native students graduate with high academic standings in all subjects, i.e., biology, chemistry, physics, algebra, geo-trigonometry, composition, literature, etc., but it is not happening."

"Not everyone is a Grade 12 graduate so there must be other options."

7. The Economy and Community Transitions

In some communities, particularly in the Northern part of the province, no high school is available and students must leave the community to further their education. Parents were concerned about the lack of preparation students receive for this change. Many students have difficulty adapting and, as a result, they do not succeed in school. The need for preparation as early as Kindergarten was seen as necessary for successful completion of school later. To prepare students for schooling outside the community, the following were seen as positive measures:

- early recognition of the need to plan for the future
- awareness of current events,
- introduction of transition programs.

Parents blamed the economic situation for creating conditions that make it impossible for people to remain in their home community if they are seeking employment.

Forced to relocate to different communities, Indian and Metis people experience a multitude of problems which are compounded by a lack of marketable skills and knowledge. This lack of knowledge makes it difficult for Indian and Metis people to find work in the new community. Parents felt that these problems could be alleviated, at least in part, by adequate preparation.

8. The Economic Situation

Parents were concerned about the economic situation of many Indian and Metis students. They felt this needs to be taken into account by school staff. Unrealistic expectations are being placed on students and families. In addition, learning experiences required in order to succeed in the school system are not being provided for Indian and Metis students because of a lack of finances.

Daily financial expectations placed upon students and their families were a concern. Even two or three dollars is too much to ask when families aren't able to afford extras. This causes embarrassment and parents were concerned about the effects on their children, particularly the loss of their self-esteem.

Parent groups from the North noted that employment upon the completion of school is not a reality for their children. The economic conditions in their communities are poor and result in unemployment, even for students who have graduated.

The lack of employment opportunities upon graduation discourage students from attending school. Job creation, therefore, is a serious concern of parents.

"There is no transition program. Indian affairs counsellors don't care. Give a kid an environment he is used to and educate him."

"Kids have to feel comfortable and be a part of things. Prepare them so they can handle leaving their homes to work or to further their education."

"Kids are realizing that they must go south for training but will return if jobs are available. At first I wasn't happy that my son was leaving. Now he is doing well and I am happy about it."

"A dollar for this and a dollar for that. I feel bad that I can't afford to give my children all the money the school asks for. I'm sure they feel bad about it too."

"Right now kids go to school to get Grade 12, not to get Grade 12 to go on to a future."

"The kids say 'Why go to school? There are no jobs anyway.'"

9. Facilities to Accommodate Needs

Concern with lack of space and facilities was expressed. Parents felt that additions and renovations are required to improve education for their children. On the other hand, the concern about one high school was that it was too large. In the parents' view, Indian and Metis students felt lost in the large computerized school and quickly dropped out.

Special provisions for dropouts who return to school were requested. Students cannot attend Community Colleges until they are 18. Therefore, upgrading isn't a feasible solution for students who drop out at 16.

Many parent groups felt the concept of separate schools was inappropriate. Rather, they saw the need for options to be used when required. However, they felt these options should not be imposed on all Indian and Metis students.

Some parents considered integration to be necessary for their children's complete education. Other parents felt separate schools are appropriate in order to prepare children for later integration.

Parents stated that reserve children are not able to fulfill homework requirements because of lifestyle differences. Parents saw a need for an after-school study hall for these students to enable them to complete homework assignments in an atmosphere conducive to study.

Parents viewed extra-curricular activities as playing a special role in their children's education. The concern was expressed that bussing children to and from the reserve eliminates their participation in these activities.

Community use of school facilities was presented as an issue. Some parents believed the school isn't used enough by the community. The school should be the focal point of the community, with special activities planned to ensure that this occurs.

10. Discipline

Parent groups voiced concern that schools allow too much freedom for students. There was a call for more discipline within the school.

11. Communication

Tuition agreements were a concern to parents because they were unsure of jurisdiction, authority, and areas of responsibility. It was felt there is a lack of clear communication with Indian Affairs. Parents, therefore, were dissatisfied with the

"Dropouts have to have a way of coming back to the school without standing out."

"Education is important to us because we have gone through the school. Someone has to set an example. We have to have a common goal for 'our children'. Our kids come here and we want the best for them."

"Build our own schools. If we didn't think that, we'd be underestimating ourselves."

"A good idea might be to have a study period with a snack provided so homework can be done before returning home after school."

"Drama, soccer, and curling, etc. are things that kids don't get to participate in. We must get parents to realize how important these are."

"I know everyone, everyone participates. I'm moving 30 miles away but I will still bring my kids here to school."

"There are too many spares, I am disgusted with my children's marks."

joint school agreement. The role of Indian Affairs in education was unclear to the parents.

In the North, the Indian and Metis parents from the local school boards felt the need for all Northern school boards to meet to discuss common problems, solutions, and ideas.

Parents were also concerned about the lack of communication between the local school boards and the Minister of Education.

12. Translency

The mobility and transiency of Indian and Metis students caused concern for parents. An effort must be made to address this problem.

13. Career Awareness

Exposure of students to various jobs and job requirements was a great concern to parents in the North. The isolation of the communities leaves children deficient in awareness of jobs and job skills. A career awareness session would help to alleviate the information gap.

14. Teacher Quality

Parents were concerned with the quality of teachers at reserve schools. They felt there are discrepancies between the quality of teachers in urban schools and those in reserve schools. Another concern was the fact that many reserve teachers have been employed at the same school for a number of years. Parents saw these teachers as becoming stagnant and suggested a rotation of teachers every few years.

"We have good communication with the school. The principal tells us problems. They come and see us. If communication is wrong, it gets straightened out right away."

"We'd like to see more communication between us and the Minister and the Department of Education."

"Attendance is a problem. Why do the kids leave school? Where do they go? Who is responsible for them?"

"'Why go to school', is what kids say. 'You don't need school because there isn't any work.'"

"Why is it that when my Grade 6 daughter came to town to school she was put into the Grade 5 class?"

"Teaching has become a family business."

Summary of Parents' Comments

Parents voiced a variety of concerns about their children's education. High drop out rates, poor attendance, transiency, and low grades were all cited as indicators that the needs of Indian and Metis children are not being met by the education system. There was a general feeling that curriculum development and programming designed to benefit Indian and Metis students will require special action and consideration if there is to be any improvement in Indian and Metis education.

Parents specifically mentioned communication between home and school and meaningful Indian and Metis involvement in the education system as two major areas in need of additional program initiatives. Staffing and personnel requirements must also be given special consideration. Hiring policies and teacher training are areas in which additional changes should occur.

Parents felt that the poor socio-economic conditions surrounding many Indian and Metis people have detrimental effects on the success of Indian and Metis students in school. Parents believed that problems relating from the socio-economic situation must be dealt with through innovative approaches and programming.

Parents' concerns were often expressed with a sense of frustration. They recognized the importance of education to their children's future, and yet have watched those children fail, feeling powerless to help. While they know many of the reasons for their children's lack of success and have solutions to offer, many parents expressed difficulty in understanding how the education system operates and how they might influence the system for the good of their children.

List of Parents' Recommendations

1. Provide accurate Indian and Metis curriculum developed by Indian and Metis People at the local, provincial, and national levels.
2. Include life skills training in the high school curriculum.
3. Teach cultural identity, pride, and responsibility as part of the curriculum.
4. Provide transition programs.

5. Provide settings for the teaching of English as a Second Language.
6. Prevent prejudice, stereotyping, and racism in the schools.
7. Provide career exposure where needed.
8. Provide a welcoming, comfortable atmosphere for Indian and Metis students in the schools.
9. Reduce teacher-student ratios.
10. Develop and implement valid testing to identify Indian and Metis students eligible for High Cost Funding for special programming, and to identify gifted Indian and Metis students.
11. At the university level, teachers should be educated in the following areas: cross-cultural education, alcohol and drug abuse, and English as a Second Language. This would promote a better understanding by teachers of Indian and Metis students.
12. Provide teacher inservice training in the areas of cross-cultural education. In addition, provide inservice training for home and school liaison workers, teacher aids and associates, and home-school co-ordinators.
13. Set standards and specific qualifications for teachers of Indian and Metis students, particularly with respect to cross-cultural requirements.
14. Hire positive Indian and Metis role models at the school level.
15. Provide Indian and Metis teacher aides in problem areas, for example Grade 7 and beyond.
16. Employ Indian and Metis professional accountants.
17. Develop contacts and involve community resource people in the school.
18. Develop strategies to increase parental involvement in all aspects of the school system.
19. Develop solutions to address the attendance and transiency problems of Indian and Metis students.
20. Provide early childhood intervention programs for Indian and Metis children.

21. Ensure that dropouts can return to school comfortably.
22. Ensure Indian and Metis representation on school boards.
23. Utilize schools as the focal point of the community.
24. Create jobs in economically poor areas.
25. Implement programming which would open communication lines between home and school and further develop positive feedback from schools to parents, a Home and School Liaison Program, for example.

Comments from Teachers, Principals, and Administrators

The major issues discussed by educator groups were:

1. Curriculum

Teachers, principals, and administrators presented curriculum development as a priority in Indian and Metis education. Various aspects of curriculum were discussed as follows:

Content

Teachers and principals expressed the need for Indian and Metis content, including materials, skill development, and concepts, as part of the core curriculum. The relevancy of current K-12 curriculum, for Indian and Metis students was questioned and a strong desire to develop and implement suitable materials was articulated. The groups felt Indian and Metis programs have to be available for all students, not just for Indian and Metis students. An understanding by non-Native students of Indian and Metis culture and values was seen as essential if positive attitudes toward Native peoples are to be developed.

Indian languages were viewed as an integral part of Indian and Metis culture. It was felt they should be taught where appropriate, and standardization and trained instructors should be a fundamental part of all language programs.

"Native language instructors need to be trained language instructors."

"Standardization of a Native language program is important so each school doesn't have to apply to have their program approved."

"I can't see a language program building self-esteem when they [students] can't do anything else well."

Cultural Activities

Cultural events were identified as a valuable extension of Indian and Metis content in curriculum and were considered to be essential learning experiences. Past experience with incorporating cultural activities as learning events resulted in Indian and Metis students learning about themselves and thereby developing positive self concepts. As well, cultural activities were seen as a way of introducing the Indian and Metis culture to the non-Native students. The participation of both cultures in these activities served to open lines of communication and created mutual awareness and understanding.

Programs

Northern teachers expressed concern about programs being irrelevant to Northern situations. A need for a less general provincial curriculum was expressed, particularly in Home Economics and Reading. In addition, it was felt a K-12 core curriculum was required to provide continuity.

Nutrition

Nutrition was a definite concern. Indian and Metis students are sometimes attending school without breakfast and proper sleep. These conditions are not conducive to effective learning. Teachers placed value on teaching about nutrition, and supported the idea of schools having a nutritional snack program as a means to alleviate this problem.

Racism

Racism and how to eliminate racism were concerns of educators. Constant discrimination causes Indian and Metis students to internalize the belief that they are incapable of success. A major factor contributing to Indian and Metis students dropping out of school is racism and the desire to avoid negative attitudes. Teaching prejudice and discrimination awareness was seen as a favourable method of reducing racism.

Work Experience

Work-study programs were seen by some educators as essential to future programming. Exposure to different types of job opportunities could create awareness of employment opportunities as well as give practical experiences for making a career choice.

"You can't preserve a culture without the language along with it."

"Learning about Indian culture and living is important. I don't understand all of it but I teach positive parts of it."

"I don't feel qualified to teach it because I don't understand it all."

"A nutrition program would be highly beneficial here. Many kids don't get breakfast here. Nutrition talks would improve on what kids ask for for lunch. The talks would also help with sleeping habits. At times kids are so tired that even a bell won't wake them."

"People have internalized the belief of incapability and 'I can't do that'."

"We need more work training. We had a special project and built six sheds but what else can we do?"

Resource Materials

A centralized system of cataloguing available resource materials was a high priority with teachers, who were frustrated by the lack of information about available materials. A clearinghouse of materials was viewed as necessary to avoid duplication.

For example, there are commercially made and teacher made resources in different schools. A cataloguing system which evaluates and identifies the purpose of the material would help minimize wasted time and money. Lists of available resource materials could be distributed throughout the province.

Testing

Teachers were concerned about current methods of acquiring additional funding from Indian Affairs for Treaty Indian students who require special programming. Teachers suggested the use of achievement tests to access special funding for Treaty Indian children. In addition, special funding is required for Metis and Non-Status Indian students as they experience similar problems and require special programming.

At the present time, it is difficult to identify gifted Indian and Metis students.

Teachers felt that some type of testing instrument needs to be developed in order to identify and recommend programming for these children.

Program follow-up was identified as an important concern. Teachers felt there should be a method of obtaining funds for special programs, but they weren't sure what process could be used. Therefore, they requested support in program planning and follow-up.

Alternative Education

Teachers, principals, and administrators saw the need for alternative education in addition to academic courses, because the academic stream causes problems and frustration for some students. Work experiences, practical learning situations, and the development work skills were seen as ways to help students become more independent and self-sufficient.

Life skills training was suggested as an appropriate alternative to academic education. In many cases, the home does not adequately prepare children in the general life skills areas. Staff should be hired to conduct life skills training as part of the regular school day. General food preparation, hygiene, and career planning were also suggested as areas where training is needed.

Family life programs were also considered valuable by teachers as many Indian and Metis students experience early entry into adult life.

"A clearinghouse for teacher-made materials (so they can be registered and not thrown out) is a need."

"[We need] follow-up services. We can get funding but we need a psychologist to test to get it and then we need support or follow-up from the psychologist to help with program planning."

"There should be an academic school and a separate vocational school. We can't forget about those kids that cannot make it academically."

Transition Programming

Educators stressed that transition programs were required in many areas of the North and on reserves, where opportunities in the home community are limited. In these instances, students must leave their communities in order to further their education or obtain employment. Some students are unwilling to leave because they are afraid to venture away from the familiarity and support of the community. Programming would make students aware early in their schooling that they may be required to relocate. Students could be exposed to lifestyles and experiences necessary to make adjusting to a different way of life easier. Several Northern teacher groups stressed that Northern students should be made aware not only of Southern lifestyles, but also of educational institutions and opportunities.

Early Childhood Intervention

Teacher, administrator, and principal groups identified early intervention programs as crucial in the development of Indian and Metis education.

Having an Indian language as a first language was cited as a cause for age-grade discrepancy among many Indian and Metis students. Indian and Metis children who do not speak English cannot meet provincial requirements. Many Indian and Metis children do not know their own Indian language well and need a sound language base before they can be expected to learn the English language. Early intervention and readiness programs were identified as a way of addressing language problems.

Readiness programming should involve oral language development. Educators noted that Indian and Metis children do not have the life experiences that the schools expect them to have to equip them for Grade 1. Readiness programming through nursery school or pre-Kindergarten could provide these necessary experiences. Daycare services provided in cooperation with the school were suggested. The teachers felt that the Department of Education should have input in the setting up of these arrangements.

According to these groups, solving the problems at an earlier age would reduce the frustration and drop out rates later on.

2. Parental Involvement and Communication

Lack of communication and parental involvement was identified as having a profound negative effect on the development of Indian and Metis education. Different areas needing more parental involvement were specified as follows:

"A language problem is noticeable. We want them to speak, read, and write all in one year. We expect too much of them. There has been tremendous growth since the readiness program began."

"Preschool should be part of the educational system so children don't get left behind in Grades 3, 4, and 5."

"Daycare within the school would give continuity of education and continued parent interest."

Parent-Teacher Interviews

Teacher groups expressed concern about the poor turnout for parent-teacher interviews. Strategies need to be developed to encourage the participation of parents. In areas of high parent participation, a contributing factor was that the teachers and principal set up interviews on the reservations rather than in the school.

Community Involvement

Community involvement with respect to Indian and Metis students was discussed. Parental support for sports activities was lacking and students either did not participate in these activities or became involved but dropped out later because they were unable to maintain attendance.

It was suggested that the school become the focal point in the community. If this were to happen, community activities held in the school would provide a means for the home and the school to interact and communicate.

Future Plans

Long-term goal planning by Indian and Metis parents for their children's education is often inadequate. Teachers require support from parents to guide and motivate students to continue their education.

Skills

Parents need to be involved in life skills training. To meet the educational needs of their children, parents need guidance with respect to their role in education and how to carry out this role effectively.

Volunteers

The lack of Indian and Metis volunteers to assist with school activities was identified as a significant problem. Many Indian and Metis parents are unaware that they have the opportunity to contribute their time in the school. They are not familiar with the school's expectations of them, and don't know how they can help out.

According to school staffs, parents have skills to offer as volunteers, but might need assistance in recognizing and using these skills.

"We hold parent interviews on the reserve twice yearly. All of the teachers go out and we get a good turnout."

"Parents must stand up and take responsibility. I used to drive kids home unpaid. Then parents said they would pick them up but didn't, so the kids quit participating in extra-curricular activities."

"Recreation centres have taken over the school's role as a community focal point."

"The people in the community have to set long-term goals for their children."

"Kids say, 'We don't want to go to school, and parents let them stay home.'"

"We can teach history but they need their own people to teach culture."

3. Attendance and Mobility

Poor student attendance and high mobility rates have a detrimental effect on the achievement of Indian and Metis students in school. Transiency was seen as the main factor contributing to poor attendance, low achievement in school, and eventual dropping out. Co-operation of parents in minimizing transiency is necessary to improve the performance of Indian and Metis students.

As well, migrancy creates problems in carrying out tuition agreements for Treaty Indian students. Disruptions in funding lead to problems in planning for the school year, particularly in the areas of staffing and curriculum. Teachers spend a great deal of time trying to bring students up to date with classes and developing individualized programs. This situation was viewed as serious because it affects the entire class. Transient students take the teacher's time, which could be spent teaching the class as a whole.

4. The Economy

The economic conditions of Indian and Metis people were viewed as detrimental to the education of their children. The unemployment problem among Indian and Metis people was seen to contribute to family breakdown and a number of social problems requiring social program intervention. Initiatives are required to bring stability, dignity, and independence to families and communities.

Northern teachers specified job creation and economic development as areas of need. Until there is employment in the North, Indian and Metis people cannot see a need for education. In addition, it was felt that Native Northerners should not have to leave the support of their communities to relocate to the South for secondary education or employment.

5. Role Models

Teachers and principals felt that Native staffing is essential to the development of Indian and Metis education. Indian and Metis teachers, teachers aids, and other education professionals and para-professionals would provide students with exposure to career possibilities. In addition, they would be able to identify with and relate to people within the school system. Teachers stated that schools have traditionally helped to cripple Indian and Metis culture and that positive role models might reverse that trend.

Contact with Indian and Metis professionals and para-professionals would also be a positive learning experience for non-Native students, as cross-cultural exposure is an important component of education. SUNTEP and NORTEP programs were

"One girl moved four times, from semester to a non-semester to semester, etc. She was in Grade 11 before and she is now here again but in Grade 10 now."

"A child will be two months here, two months there, and so on and by Grade 6 is lost."

"Economic development with training is essential. Natives, given a chance, will work as they have their pride too."

"Jobs give stability and dignity to a family and a community. Unemployment causes these to break down."

"Children already lose hope in Grade 6 and drop out because no future plans are seen."

"Communities suffer from high rates of unemployment and a heavy reliance on social welfare. Such a scenario has many negative effects on a child, like the absence of role models or goals to which he can aspire. The goals placed on him by the school are superimposed and often artificial."

"Teachers are a start, but there should also be doctors and nurses."

viewed as very good ways of providing positive role models. The groups stated Indian and Metis professionals should be placed at Division III and IV levels where the highest dropout rates occur.

6. Student-Teacher Ratios

The groups considered lower student-teacher ratios as a major issue in the education of Indian and Metis students.

Often, Indian and Metis students need time-consuming, individualized classes such as English as a Second Language.

Unfortunately, there is not enough time for this specialized attention in most classrooms. As a result, students requiring individualized instruction are falling behind. Teachers expressed frustration with this situation and emphasized the need to hire more staff to lower the student-teacher ratios.

Northern teachers expressed concern about student-teacher ratios and felt that the numbers for acceptable student-teacher ratio used by the province did not apply to the North. Provincial statistics were seen as irrelevant because individualized teaching needs were greater in the North than in the South.

7. Communication

The need to have contact and on-going communication between home and school was a high priority for many teacher-principal groups. Most groups were not sure how to encourage communication and suggested that a liaison worker between the home and school might be the answer. This liaison person should be an individual who is comfortable with the school system and the people of the community. Teachers saw a need for a liaison person to act as a contact regarding attendance problems, parent-teacher interviews, tutoring, and student counselling.

Communication with parents, having the mechanism to get things going, and keeping communication lines open were seen as vital to all future Indian and Metis education programming.

8. Teacher Education

Teacher education as it relates to Indian and Metis education was a concern to teachers. They considered cross-cultural education at the university level to be an essential requirement for a teacher instructing Indian and Metis students.

"What do you do with the gifted or the right-on kids? Do you let them wait while you work with the rest?... We recommend smaller class sizes and more teacher aides."

"We had a liaison worker but he became a political football.... This liaison person must have complete trust and respect of school and parents and must use the direct approach."

"The Home Visit program gets parents to realize that the school is really concerned, it is more effective in getting parents to come to the school."

"I think a university class can definitely help to change attitudes."

University classes in Indian and Native Studies were also a stated priority. Teachers felt that, in order to successfully teach Indian and Metis students, they must be knowledgeable about Indian and Metis culture and history. Pre-service and inservice training in cross-cultural education should be initiated to equip teachers in meeting the needs of Indian and Metis students.

Northern teachers stressed the importance of professional development, but saw the need for revamping professional development funding. Because of isolation, professional development is very expensive in the North. Air fare is costly and the time needed for travel is extensive. Teachers agreed that inservice is a good idea, but would like to be able to attend inservice sessions outside of the community in order to keep peer contacts.

Development of methodology classes for Indian Languages is required in order to have qualified teachers.

9. Counsellors

Personal guidance and career counselling services for Indian and Metis students was seen as a necessity. Indian and Metis students, for various reasons, have great difficulty in adjusting to the school and the education system as a whole. Personal guidance counselling is essential for these students. The non-Native staff feels unqualified to play the personal counselling role because of their inability to empathize with the problem. It was felt that only a person of Indian or Metis ancestry can deal effectively with Indian and Metis students' problems. Teachers also stated that they do not have time to do extensive counselling.

Northern teachers stressed the need for career guidance because of the economic situation and lack of employment in the North. The groups felt Indian and Metis students were not able to comprehend career paths and lacked exposure to potential career and employment opportunities.

10. Attitudes

Self-esteem of Indian and Metis students was a major concern of the teacher-principal groups. The groups felt that, because of repeated failure within the school system and because of societal conflicts, Indian and Metis students suffer a tremendous loss of pride and self-esteem. Approaches that concentrate on building a positive self-image were suggested as possible solutions. The teachers stated that, if they could get the students to feel good about themselves through changing attitudes and identifying problems, teaching and learning in schools would become much more effective.

"Teachers should be educated as to aspects of the Indian lifestyle like discipline and menstruation. Inservice for it is needed."

"Give evaluation and inservice to keep up motivation."

"We need education and inservice. Teachers are needed that know and understand the Native lifestyle. Otherwise, it takes one too long to learn on the job and the children lose out in their education."

"Trained guidance counsellors are lacking. This school could use one full time. The kids relate to someone local and Native easier."

"Some people here do jobs of the counselling nature but we don't call it counselling. Maybe that is why it is successful."

"Advertise so people can feel good about themselves."

"The Metis unit was taught by a Metis student teacher from SUNTEP and it helped the students to say 'I am Metis and proud'."

11. Documented Transfers

Teachers were concerned about placement of new students. Often, Indian and Metis students come to the school without any form of documentation on their past education, and the teachers and principals have no way of knowing in which grade to place them. A great deal of time is wasted testing children.

Teachers find themselves spending time giving individual assistance to transferred students. This takes time away from other students. Transferred students often get placed in Special Education classes when they do not necessarily require such classes.

12. Northern Housing

Housing provisions for Northern teachers should be an integral part of present Northern Lights School Division operations. The teachers wanted security because they felt that NLSD contracting out administrative duties made them feel threatened with respect to housing accommodations. The assigning of this responsibility to another agency merely adds to problems of communication, efficiency, and cost.

13. Interagency Approach

The concept of an interagency approach was suggested to initiate changes in the traditional school role. The school, the police, and social workers could work together to help establish a more stable community. As a result, more stable employment records and an improvement in the economic conditions could be expected.

14. Speech and Hearing

The lack of university programs for speech and hearing pathologists was identified as a concern. The principal-teacher groups noted that these professionals are very scarce and hard to contact when they are needed, particularly in the North.

"This school would like a cut-off date for enrolment as a solution to the mobility problem, as well as some sort of documentation so that correct placement of students in the proper grade level occurs."

"We must go through too much red tape now. We want back under Northern Lights School Division so we can use it as a bargaining item."

Summary of Teachers', Principals' and Administrators' Comments

Like parents, teachers often expressed a feeling of frustration. As professionals they were concerned that all their students should do well and worked hard to that end. But despite the hard work, many Indian and Metis students do not succeed in school.

Teachers stated that parents must be involved, but often did not know how to get that involvement. Open lines of communication and increasing Indian and Metis involvement in education are measures required to improve relationships between home and school, between the school and student, and between the school and other agencies.

Curriculum and related program development are essential to Indian and Metis education with special emphasis on long-term planning and follow-up. More efficient and effective program strategies must be developed on an ongoing basis with aims and objectives clearly defined to meet the needs of Indian and Metis students. Teachers stated that they could not develop all necessary curricula and resources themselves.

Student attendance and transiency is a major concern to teachers. A policy is needed for administrative purposes, along with the development of strategies to reduce the problems resulting from the high mobility rate among Indian and Metis students.

Quality education for all is a high priority. To attain this quality, teacher education must be refined. Innovative strategies and programs must be developed and implemented to enable teachers to teach all students well. Special attention should be given to the teaching of Indian and Metis students with unique programming needs. To help meet their needs, the employment of positive role models within the school system should be made a priority. Teachers stated that their own understanding of Indian and Metis people needs development, but that there is a lack of professional development opportunities.

List of Teachers', Principals' and Administrators' Recommendations

1. Implement an Indian and Metis curriculum development process for use in Saskatchewan schools for both Native and non-Native students.
2. Develop long-term objectives in the area of Indian and Metis Education.
3. Develop early childhood intervention programs, particularly for oral language development and language experience.
4. Develop a curriculum guide geared toward Indian and Metis education.
5. Integrate self concept development programs into curricula and cultural activities.
6. Develop and implement awareness programs regarding racism and prejudice as part of the regular curriculum.
7. Develop and implement nutrition programs where appropriate.
8. Incorporate life skills training into curricula, particularly at the high school level.
9. Develop and implement cultural activities to supplement Native Studies courses. These should be developed with Indian and Metis parent input.
10. Create transition programs to assist students in relocating from Northern communities or reservations in order to continue their education or seek employment.
11. Modify courses such as Home Economics, Art, and Reading to incorporate Indian and Metis and Northern content.
12. Provide alternative programming for the non-academically inclined.
13. Develop accurate, bias-free testing devices for Indian and Metis students.
14. Establish a clearing house for the cataloguing and distribution of materials and resources for use by teachers.

15. Develop and implement follow-up services for existing Indian and Metis education programming.
16. Establish mandatory university classes for teacher trainees in the areas of cross-cultural education, Indian and Native Studies, and Indian and Metis language methodology.
17. Train Indian language instructors.
18. Provide pre-service and inservice training for teachers in the areas of cross-cultural education, Indian language methodology, and Indian and Native Studies.
19. Expand SUNTEP and NORTEP to include training of secondary education teachers.
20. Employ professional Indian and Metis guidance and career counsellors in schools with high Indian and Metis student enrolment.
21. Develop a university operated hearing and speech pathologist program.
22. Employ Indian and Metis role models in the schools.
23. Develop and implement a home and school liaison program to further parental involvement and encourage communication between home and school.
24. Develop and activate parent awareness classes to deliver life skills training and make parents aware of their role in education.
25. Encourage Indian and Metis parents to participate in the decision-making processes in education at all levels.
26. Encourage teachers and schools to be more receptive and accessible to Indian and Metis parents.
27. Develop a policy to establish a cut-off date for transferring students in order to better administer Indian Affairs funding and plan programs in the school.
28. Lower student-teacher ratios to accommodate special needs of Indian and Metis students, especially in cases of age-grade discrepancies.
29. Provide study centres for evening activity, especially for on-reserve Treaty Indian students.
30. Provide transportation for Indian and Metis students prohibited from engaging in extra-curricular activities because of bussing systems.
31. Re-establish the school as the focal point of the community, with improving communication between the home/community and school as the primary purpose.
32. Make components of the Community School Program available where required.
33. Develop and maintain on-going communication between band councils and schools.
34. Develop and utilize provincially approved text books to minimize problems caused by student mobility.
35. Establish daycare, nursery school, and other early childhood education programs as part of the regular school system.
36. Transfer the administrative responsibilities of teacher housing accommodation to the Northern Lights School Division.
37. Develop an Indian language policy to standardize Indian language courses in schools.
38. Create employment opportunities and awareness programs in areas of socio-economic disparity.
39. Develop an interagency approach to solve some of the problems experienced by Indian and Metis students in the education system.

Comments from Students

1. Parental Involvement

The student groups viewed parental involvement as a necessary ingredient in successful Indian and Metis education development.

Home problems were identified as the number one cause for the struggle of Indian and Metis students within the school system. Although the need for parental support is great, it is currently lacking and this causes feelings of frustration and defeat among students.

2. Curriculum

The groups identified Kindergarten to Grade 12 Indian and Metis curriculum as requiring further development.

The Indian and Metis history currently offered is too general. There is a need for a localized, contemporary, and, therefore, relevant Native Studies course. Indian and Metis students expressed a desire to learn about their own people from an historical and contemporary perspective before investigating European cultures.

Indian language courses from Kindergarten to Grade 12 were also requested by Indian and Metis students. Development of both oral and written courses in Indian languages was favoured as opposed to only the spoken language. The important contribution of language to a culture was recognized by the students and the desire to learn their language was expressed.

Indian and Metis curriculum would benefit non-Native students as well as Native students. Educating the non-Native about Indian and Metis lifestyles is a vital way of improving relations between these groups and enhancing the self-image of Indian and Metis students.

Updated curricula and textbooks are badly needed in some areas. Students reported hearing the same lecture year after year and found the repetition monotonous. There were requests for more relevant family life programming.

Electives and class alternatives should be included in the development of Indian and Metis education. In the North, the students are not always able to acquire the subjects needed to enter university, and students reported that they are frustrated by this situation. Correspondence courses were attempted but were dropped because of difficulties and lack of support.

Courses such as welding, mechanics, computer technology, and photography were curriculum alternatives suggested by students. The lack of arts, music, and dance classes was also an issue raised, as was physical education in the North.

"We need more Native teachers, Native history, and Native art. We know enough Anglo-Saxon stuff."

"More Saskatchewan, local, and Canadian history and less Asian history is wanted."

"We would like a Cree language class. It makes more sense to us than French."

"We'd like to learn our language, culture, and history. What was taught is too general -- language and tradition are important."

"Increase Native studies to give the white students an understanding and the Native students more knowledge."

"We would like an art class. We can't take it because we have too many other classes to take."

"Grade 12's don't get Phys. Ed. at all."

The students need physical education, but as they got into the higher grades the class was not offered. Inter-school sports and recreational activities were also recommended.

Cultural and recreational programming is a major priority of the Indian and Metis student groups. Culture and tradition are very important to Indian and Metis people, but there has been little cultural awareness in schools. Students stated that an occasional powwow does not constitute comprehensive cultural programming.

Cultural activities or culture clubs during school time were discussed as possible program alternatives. It was felt that these types of activities would be good for encouraging involvement.

Implementation of the semester system was requested by many students. They thought it would better accommodate their needs and could prevent occurrences of failure in the school system.

Indian and Metis students also expressed concern that, even when courses are offered, sometimes materials to work with are so poor that it negatively affects interest and motivation. They wanted to take Home Economics and hairdressing classes but these classes could not be offered because of lack of resources and materials.

Northern Indian and Metis student groups requested high schools in their home communities. The students felt they should not have to leave their home and community support in order to complete school. In addition, a technical school similar to Kelsey Institute was requested for the North.

Departmental exams were noted as a major concern. What was taught all year was not the same material on which students were tested on departmental exams. The discrepancy between curriculum and exams should be corrected either by schools or the Department of Education.

Students who utilized individualized work packages expressed dissatisfaction with the approach. They were confused and lacked guidance in completing the courses. Too often this left them ill-prepared for exams.

Students expressed dissatisfaction with the practice of grade mixing, and felt that the practice often leads to frustration. The teacher does not always have time to teach everybody differently. This often results in either students knowing the material already, or the material being above their heads.

"We've had no cultural awareness at school, just a pow wow on the reserve."

"A cultural club would be a good thing to have after school."

"We need vocational classes like hairdressing. We love it during Home Ec. but we don't have the materials to work with."

"Change curriculum because the departmental exams are not what is taught."

3. Counsellors

Student groups noted that Indian and Metis counsellors were of major importance and should be included as an essential part of Indian and Metis education. Indian and Metis students stated they have many personal and family problems and they need counselling.

Indian and Metis counsellors provide Indian and Metis students with a person to whom they can talk and relate. Students commented that many of their non-Native teachers are unfriendly and unreceptive. Students did not think a non-Native could relate to or understand "where they were coming from." A Native counsellor, on the other hand, would be more able to meet the special counselling needs of these students.

Indian and Metis counsellors could have a positive effect on the dropout rates and could possibly work on getting dropouts to return to the school system. These counsellors were thought to be excellent home/school liaison contact people.

Career counselling is a major concern of students. In some areas, the students did not know of any future education or employment opportunities. Students stated they require this service if they are to continue in the school system.

4. Indian and Metis Teachers and Teacher Education

Student groups recommended that Indian and Metis teachers be seen as a fundamental component of Indian and Metis education development. These teachers could teach Indian and Metis studies and Indian languages effectively. The student groups acknowledged that they could identify with and relate to Native teachers.

Indian and Metis students expressed concern about teacher education. They suggested that both Native and non-Native teachers should take cultural awareness classes, as they found many of their teachers to have "tunnel vision." They lacked understanding and were not sensitive to the needs of Indian and Metis students.

5. Racism

Indian and Metis student groups identified racism as a major issue. Prejudice is extreme in some schools and methods of attacking this problem need to be initiated. Programming with respect to attitudes and awareness should be implemented in the early grades and continued throughout schooling.

"We would like guidance counsellors to talk to if we had to. Our Cree language instructor is Native so we talk to him."

"Our counsellor talks only on religion and doesn't contact parents. After awhile kids just drop out."

"We need career information. We don't know what jobs or education is available or how we can get funding."

"Put an emphasis on attitudes before it is too late."

"Teachers see only what they want to see."

"Educate others so maybe they will understand us Indians."

"There is a lot of prejudice here, but the teachers are okay."

6. Dropouts

Student groups identified the dropout situation as a major problem which should be addressed. The need to find ways to prevent students from dropping out and to assist dropouts in returning to school was viewed as basic to student success. Alternatively, a special upgrading class for dropouts was suggested.

Personal and family problems were cited as the main reasons for students dropping out. Other reasons given were:

- peer pressure (friends drop out so you follow to ensure your membership in the group),
- lack of interest and commitment on the part of students,
- the age-grade discrepancy, which causes embarrassment and frustration,
- lack of encouragement and support from the home and the school,
- lack of someone at the school to talk to and feel comfortable with,
- lack of reasons to attend school as no jobs are available upon completion.

"Kids would return if they weren't older than the other students. A special class for dropouts is needed. Not upgrading classes because the adults all go there, not the dropouts."

"No one helps from home for dropouts. Parents don't help and the school doesn't encourage students to go either."

"Why finish Grade 12? There are no jobs here anyway."

Summary of Students' Comments

Curriculum and program development were identified as the students' main priorities. They requested immediate strategies and approaches to effectively meet programming needs. A number of different programs were mentioned, including programs to help Indian and Metis students cope successfully with socio-economic problems and cultural differences, which negatively affect student performance.

Communication between Indian and Metis students, schools, teachers, and non-Native students is inadequate, and causes Indian and Metis students to feel alienated. Indian and Metis involvement in the school would increase the non-Native students' understanding of Native peoples and, at the same time, would increase Indian and Metis students' chances for success within the school system.

Students felt that changes are required in the area of teacher education. Programs to ensure that teachers have a knowledge of cross-cultural settings, particularly those involving Indian and Metis students, is crucial. Those people teaching Native Studies or Indian languages should be qualified Indian or Metis people.

Many of the Indian and Metis students' concerns were in the affective areas. They wanted to make schools better places for themselves by having more Indian and Metis people, from parents to professionals, in the schools and by having all school programs better reflect their cultures and needs.

List of Students' Recommendations

1. Include Indian and Metis curricula in provincial schools from Kindergarten through Grade 12.
2. Develop additional programming to promote knowledge of Indian and Metis cultures.
3. Make career counselling and knowledge of career opportunities available in schools.
4. Provide awareness classes on racism and attitudes for students and teachers in order to reduce racism and stereotyping.

5. Incorporate Fine Arts classes into curriculum in all areas of the province.
6. Expand Physical Education programming at the high school level.
7. Provide Indian and Metis Studies and language classes for all students.
8. Make Indian language courses optional, like French, at the high school level.
9. Increase local and Canadian content, especially in the Social Studies curriculum.
10. Involve elders in teaching culture.
11. Make computer classes available in all schools.
12. Discontinue correspondence classes or make them less difficult. As an alternative to Correspondence classes, offer classes in the community.
13. Help dropouts to complete their education by assisting them in returning to school or by providing upgrading classes.
14. Develop and promote alternative courses, including vocational and technical courses.
15. Examine class options to ensure they are meeting the needs of the students.
16. Employ Indian and Metis teachers.
17. Require teachers to take classes in cross-cultural education.
18. Employ Indian and Metis guidance, career, and home-school liaison counsellors in schools.
19. Update curriculum and resource materials and make them relevant to Indian and Metis students.
20. Prohibit mixing of grades.
21. Implement the semester system where appropriate.
22. Review and refine the individual work package approach.
23. Make departmental exams consistent with what is actually taught in the school.
24. Establish high schools in all communities so students do not have to leave their communities to finish their education.
25. Develop and promote parental involvement and support.
26. Develop an approach to solve or minimize home problems and student frustrations which arise as a result of these problems.

Comments from School Boards

The major issues presented by the boards were:

1. Indian and Metis Parental Involvement

School boards identified Indian and Metis parental involvement as a major issue in the development of Indian and Metis education.

Several problems related to parental involvement are:

Interest

Many of the boards felt Indian and Metis parents lack interest in the education of their children. Boards saw the need to develop methods of promoting education.

"To open doors, we must go to them and the teachers must accept the fact that they are going to teach Indians."

in particular the value of education, among Indian and Metis parents. It was felt this would increase the parents' desires to become involved.

The boards stated that Indian and Metis parents do not have an understanding of the education system. Therefore, parents do not realize they are expected to support and encourage their children to attend school and strive for success.

Board Representation

Some boards recommended that Indian and Metis representation be required on school boards. The boards did not profess to have all the answers and requested the assistance of Indian and Metis parents in developing solutions to problems experienced by their children.

However, while there appeared to be a consensus among the boards regarding the need for parental involvement, there were diverse opinions about what form and at what level this input should take. The following are examples of opinions expressed by the boards:

- A liaison person should be employed to establish and maintain communication lines between the education councils of reserves and the school and board, especially regarding their respective policies.
- A representative of the band council at the division board level could assist with tuition agreements and guaranteed annual funding.
- A Native representative at the division board level is necessary to ensure Indian and Metis participation in the school system.
- Many bands want their own representative on the division board, but the boards felt that, in areas where several bands are included in the division area, this would create an imbalance of Indian and Metis representation.
- Boards were reluctant to make the first move to include Indian and Metis representation on division boards, feeling that the onus is on Indian and Metis people to involve themselves.

Program Planning

The boards felt that, unless there is input from the parents, programming for Indian and Metis students will be missing an essential element. Parental input could provide direction and sensitivity in program planning. Discussion of problems and co-operative development of solutions could be incorporated into the program development process. Involvement by Indian and Metis parents in the planning process could also serve to establish two-way communication, which in turn would promote a better understanding between parents and the school.

"Change the home environment through education of parents. You cannot teach tired and hungry kids."

"Local boards should have more input if they are ready."

"We need a Native liaison to get involvement from parents because if tried at a system level, it is superficial."

"We need a liaison between the reserve education council and ourselves so we understand each others' policies and what we are presently advertising for."

"The problem is, we deal with three reserves and they each want a representative on a five member board."

"Program development should be done locally and also co-operatively."

"We take our directions from the parents, not the political leaders."

Parent-Teacher Interviews

Parent-teacher interviews are poorly attended by Indian and Metis parents. It was felt by the boards that parents do not realize they are expected to attend. Previous negative experiences may have deterred parents from approaching the school, and the boards suggested parent education classes on the reserve as a solution. Indian and Metis parents must be encouraged to come to the school, not only for interviews, but to participate as volunteers in the classroom as well.

2. Indian and Metis Counsellors

The presence of Indian and Metis counsellors in the school was identified as an essential element of Indian and Metis education development. Two types of counsellors are required in schools for Indian and Metis students. These were:

Personal and Guidance Counsellors

A Native professional counsellor should be available to Indian and Metis students to provide career information and counselling. This person should provide counselling for students with personal problems and, when required, counselling for parents as well. In addition, the Native counsellor would be visible to students as a role model.

Liaison Workers

Liaison workers are needed to initiate and maintain contact with homes, offer parent awareness classes, counsel students, and establish and maintain working relationships with social service agencies.

Establishing communication between the home and the school was considered one of the most important steps in setting the stage for the success of Indian and Metis students. The counsellor positions were seen as essential in establishing this communication.

3. Attendance and Mobility

Most of the school boards stated that attendance and mobility are a major problem with Indian and Metis students. Absenteeism causes students to fall behind, become frustrated, and eventually drop out.

Mobility of students is also a concern because of problems with tuition agreements. When a high rate of transiency occurs, planning and staffing are put into a state of chaos. Policy concerning cut-off dates for transfers was requested.

"At carnivals the parents attend, but they don't show up for parent interviews."

"The presence of Native professionals in schools is making a definite impact. They are more involved in counselling than we expected."

"Bridge the gaps by using SUNTEP, NORTEP, etc."

"We need a union of people working together, not apart. We have to do this to gain success."

"The board is unhappy with the student achievement and the division office is unhappy with the inconsistency of enrolment. An example is that a student attended 70 of our 200 days and the band is angry because the student isn't passed."

4. Curriculum

Another priority item listed by school boards was curriculum development. Various aspects of curriculum development were discussed, including the following:

Content

Indian and Metis content should be a part of the standard curriculum. Special programming would not be necessary if the present curriculum included Indian and Metis content from Kindergarten through Grade 12. Indian and Metis heritage and history are very important to this country and should not be omitted from curriculum.

Boards also expressed the desire to see more religious studies classes developed.

Program Modification

Nutrition programming was seen as very important. Some trustees stated that children are attending school hungry and tired, and that parents are not fulfilling their responsibilities. A snack program or hot lunches were suggested as ways to solve immediate problems. Nutrition classes were also seen as necessary to address long-term problems.

Special means of dealing with mathematics were suggested by some school boards, particularly in the North. Many Indian and Metis students in the Northern Lights School Division are having difficulties and are, in many cases, at a lower grade level in Mathematics than in other subject areas.

It was suggested that all mathematics classes be held at the same time during the school day. Students could then attend the appropriate class. With proper placement, students could perhaps raise their level of mathematics skills. The need for individualized attention would be reduced and student schedules would not be difficult to plan.

Trustees regarded improvement of reading skills as an immediate need. Many Indian and Metis children have language problems which adversely affect reading skills, and more effort should be put toward addressing this problem.

In the North, school boards cited the need for Northern students to be exposed to the South. Because Northern students have to leave the community to further their education or employment opportunities, preparation for leaving the home community is essential. Counselling and field trips to universities and institutes were suggested. As well, different fields of employment not familiar to Northern students were suggested as target areas for outside exposure.

"Recognize the curriculum review as continuous and not limited to social studies."

"Nutrition is a problem here, but it isn't unique to Natives."

"Maslow's hierarchy of needs applies here. Food and hunger come first, education is later."

"I need to see English taught well. My son can't get past the holdog stand without it."

"Isolation and segregation cause kids to quit."

"Money should be raised to give kids exposure. An example is Regina. The students here don't know where it is."

Preschool programming was recommended to address problems related to language and lifestyle differences. Early childhood intervention programs could minimize these problems. Northern trustees stated that, in addition to these programs, daycare and school services should be incorporated as a single system.

Some boards presented community or survival school concepts as a way to meet the needs of Indian and Metis students, particularly at the Division III and IV levels. The unique backgrounds of Indian and Metis students lead to a multitude of problems in the present system.

The development and implementation of two-week curriculum modules was suggested. This system would be particularly helpful in schools where student transiency is a problem. Students could start with the most recently studied module instead of starting over at the beginning of the year.

Many trustees stated that follow-up on any program modifications is required to see if program objectives are being met, and to identify areas requiring program revision.

Self-Image Development

The building and maintenance of positive self-images among Indian and Metis students was listed as a necessary part of Indian and Metis education.

Programming should stress the importance of self-worth and knowledge of individuals and their cultures.

Cultural activities and clubs to facilitate the development of positive self-images should be encouraged in schools where there are Indian and Metis students.

Language

Indian languages are a necessary part of the provincial curriculum, and language classes should be offered in communities where the need is evident. It was stipulated by boards that these courses should be standardized and taught by trained language instructors.

Indian and Metis Involvement

Curriculum should be developed and implemented co-operatively by the Indian and Metis people and the school system.

"Preschool is needed here. If children had readiness programs early, it could reduce later frustrations."

"Give them their own school, maybe they need this. Give them guidance until they can do it on their own. Their lifestyle is different and can't be controlled, or they will lose their way of life completely. I would like people to tell me their goals and what they want."

"Programs need follow-up after creation."

"There is no identity of students within the system."

"Local boards should be responsible for sitting down and planning with teachers."

Resource Materials

Many school boards identified the lack of available resource materials as a major problem. Good materials are not always easy to find or obtain. There needs to be a system for cataloguing and distributing resource materials developed on Indian and Metis education.

5. Testing

The boards were concerned about biased testing with respect to Indian and Metis students. They requested that the use of culturally biased testing be discontinued, and that valid testing methods which are free of bias be used.

6. Teacher Education

School boards identified teacher education as a major concern with respect to Indian and Metis education. University level cross-cultural awareness classes and Indian and Metis Studies classes were considered essential components of teacher training. In addition, conferences and inservice sessions on Indian and Metis education were identified as needs if teachers are to be well equipped to teach Indian and Metis students.

Teachers with "community mindedness" were considered an asset to schools with Indian and Metis students. These teachers can assist in establishing and maintaining communication lines between the home or community and the school.

7. Student-Teacher Ratios

Student-teacher ratios have a direct impact in the classroom and were a concern of school boards. The major concern was with English as a Second Language instruction, which requires a great deal of individual teacher time. Lack of teacher time, combined with irregular attendance, causes students to fall behind in their classwork. Lower student-teacher ratios are perhaps a better solution than special education programming.

8. Federal and Provincial Co-operation

Some school boards considered the relationship between the Federal and Provincial governments to be a major issue. They felt the two levels of government should work together with more demonstrated respect for their

"Materials must go through the Department of Education and a list of something must be passed out also on how to use the materials with your Social Studies or Language Arts program."

"Native students have reading difficulties and because of this, tests are not accurate assessments of IQ and penalize Indian and Metis students."

"The Native parents want the best for their children, like more teacher time or not having the wrong teacher teaching them."

"Have **all** teachers leaving college as good teachers."

"Give our kids the same program but get more teachers and lower the class ratio."

"Reduce pupil-teacher ratio to catch those falling behind. We need more teachers here, as the provincial average doesn't apply here."

"The provincial government needs to try and deal with the federal government directly. If parents initiate the request, it will have good effects."

responsibilities in Indian and Metis education. Inadequate communication causes a great deal of uncertainty at the division and local school board level. If there were improved co-operation between the Federal and Provincial governments, roles and responsibilities could be clarified and educational improvement facilitated.

9. Facilities

Boards stated that, because of expanding enrolments, the amount of space available in schools is inadequate. In the North, schools and renovations are already inadequate upon completion of construction.

On the other hand, one board stated that high schools should not be too large because Indian and Metis students became alienated in large schools and quickly drop out.

10. Local Board Responsibility

Some boards in the North expressed concern about the present level of activity of local boards. They felt local boards should be given more responsibility when they are ready for it, and should be provided with education and training to prepare them for this additional responsibility.

11. Dropouts

The dropout situation was cited as a major issue in Indian and Metis education. A closer look should be given to the causes and effects of dropping out. It appears that schools cannot respond quickly enough to student problems or provide the appropriate response. This results in student frustration and the eventual dropping out of Indian and Metis students from the school system.

12. Indian and Metis Role Models

Positive role models are essential for Indian and Metis students. Indian and Metis teacher aides are particularly beneficial in classrooms where student-teacher ratios are high. Besides acting as role models, these aides can provide encouragement and assistance. Indian and Metis teachers, liaison workers, and guidance counsellors were suggested as other examples of role models. SUNTEP and NORTEP graduates were viewed as excellent examples.

"Rapidly expanding enrolments is the problem. Even after our new school is built, we will have to use 12 portable classrooms."

"Local boards should have more input into the Northern Lights School Division if they are ready for it."

"Someone is needed to help the students and the parents feel more comfortable. Our SUNTEP student really helps."

"Native role models are also needed at the high school level."

13. Teacher Immobility or Mobility

Some boards felt that teaching in the same place for 20 to 30 years causes teachers to stagnate. Measures should be taken to prevent this from occurring. A few Northern Boards considered high rates of staff turnover to be negative. Continuity and stability are seriously affected, particularly with respect to program planning and implementation. Measures to correct the situation were requested.

14. Communication with Northern Schools

Northern school boards identified the need for directives to come from the North, not the South. The Northern Lights School Division head office in Prince Albert is too far removed from the North.

In addition, Northern boards felt that direct communication with the Department of Education is necessary. Current methods of communication seem to involve too many intermediaries.

15. Socio-Economic Conditions

School boards identified socio-economic conditions as a significant problem among Indian and Metis students. Indian and Metis people lack job skills and, as a result, job opportunities are scarce. Because of poor future opportunities, children are not motivated to complete their education. They become unemployed, and the cycle repeats itself. A major economic stimulus is needed in conjunction with Indian and Metis education development.

"The only jobs available here do not require an education so children are not encouraged to attend school."

16. Inadequate Bussing

Inadequate bussing is affecting attendance of Indian and Metis children in school.

Trustees recommended improvements to the bussing system to ensure adequate transportation for Indian students.

17. Racism

School boards acknowledged that racism must be dealt with. Differences in cultures are presently being treated in a negative manner. Positive relationships and co-operation among peoples should be encouraged.

"An example in our white culture is a responsible young mother who lets kids play together now but hopes that they know the difference by Division III."

18. Grant Structure

School boards felt that the school grants structure creates a number of problems. The established amount of taxes to be collected determines the amount of the education grant to be received. But because high tax arrears are evident in some communities, trustees face a large deficit which they are unable to correct. Measures are needed to rectify this problem.

Summary of School Boards' Comments

School board members were very concerned about the failure rate of Indian and Metis children in school. They felt that the problem is related to poor attendance and that Indian and Metis parents must become supporters of the school system if any progress is to be made. Mobility and attendance problems must also be addressed through the establishment of policy statements regarding enrolments and transfers.

Curriculum development specific to Indian and Metis people is needed to improve education for Indian and Metis students.

Teacher education is an area that requires development as well. Boards communicated the need for evaluation of programs and projects to ensure that teachers are as effective as possible and can adequately meet the students' needs.

The poor socio-economic conditions of Indian and Metis people do much to prevent their children from being successful in the school system. Without programming aimed at reducing the effects of these conditions, an increase in Indian and Metis student retention and achievement is not a realistic expectation.

Indian and Metis involvement within the school system and the opening of communication lines were recognized as essential to the betterment of education for Indian and Metis students. Although some trustees felt special accommodation might be needed at the board level to encourage Indian and Metis involvement, most felt that the present system is adequate and that involvement should be sought in other ways.

List of School Boards Recommendations

1. Develop approaches to enhance parent involvement at all levels.
2. Develop approaches to enhance communication between home and school.
3. Develop approaches to educate parents on the value of education.
4. Address problems related to home environments through parent education.
5. Instruct parents on how to participate in a parent-teacher interview.
6. Develop approaches to gain input from Indian and Metis people in the development and implementation of curriculum.
7. Develop and implement Indian and Metis curriculum.
8. Implement early childhood intervention programs to deal with language problems and problems relating to lack of experiences.
9. Develop and implement program initiatives in response to age-grade discrepancies among Indian and Metis children.
10. Address and monitor the drop-out situation among Indian and Metis students.
11. Provide awareness programs on racism and discrimination within the school system in order to reduce racism and stereotyping.
12. Develop culturally unbiased tests for Indian and Metis students.

13. Incorporate self concept development for Indian and Metis students into the school curriculum.
14. Implement a standard procedure for teaching Mathematics throughout the Northern Lights School Division.
15. Develop authorized Indian and Metis resources and program materials.
16. Establish a cataloguing and distribution system for Indian and Metis resource materials for use by teachers.
17. Develop and implement alternative, survival, or community schools to meet Indian and Metis high school students' needs.
18. Expose Northern Indian and Metis students to employment and educational opportunities in the South.
19. Ensure that curriculum review is continuous.
20. Ensure that program follow-up takes place in order to evaluate and refine program initiatives.
21. Develop initiatives to address the attendance and mobility problem among Indian and Metis students.
22. Establish policy statements on enrolment in order to reduce chaos caused by student transiency.
23. Ensure that all teachers have cross-cultural education and Native Studies classes before becoming fully qualified.
24. Hire teachers possessing the quality of "community mindedness."
25. Encourage teachers in the North to stay more than one year before moving on.
26. Encourage teacher mobility so that teachers remain motivated and do not become stagnated.
27. Ensure that teacher aides are hired in classrooms where the student-teacher ratios are high.
28. Provide inservice on Indian and Metis education.
29. Utilize Indian and Metis program consultants.
30. Incorporate Indian and Metis guidance and career counsellors into the school system.
31. Hire people to act as home and school liaisons to ensure that lines of communication are open.
32. Hire Indian and Metis people in all areas of schooling to provide positive role models for Indian and Metis students.
33. Create jobs in areas of need.
34. Supply adequate bus service from the reserve to the schools.
35. Ensure that rising enrolments are considered prior to school renovations and new school construction.
36. Lower student-teacher ratios when required.
37. Incorporate daycare into the school system.
38. Change the school year to accommodate "spring fever."
39. Ensure co-operation between Federal and Provincial governments in planning for Indian and Metis education.
40. Address problems relating to the current grant structure and gaps that occur as a result of tax arrears in some Northern communities.
41. Place the Northern Lights School Division office in the North so that directives are not coming from the South.
42. Include Indian and Metis representation in the administration of joint schools.
43. Ensure that local boards be given more power if they demonstrate capability.
44. Establish clear provincial direction on Indian and Metis education to avoid inconsistency.

Comments from Groups and Organizations

Major issues presented by interest groups and organizations were as follows:

1. Curriculum

All of the groups considered curriculum development as an important element of Indian and Metis education. In discussing curriculum, several aspects were addressed:

Content

Indian and Metis content in curriculum was seen as necessary if education is to benefit Indian and Metis students. Indian and Metis people are an important part of both Canadian history and contemporary Canadian society. Native peoples need to be educated about their own heritage, and non-Natives need to develop an awareness and understanding of the history and culture of Native peoples. Indian and Metis content should be included in all subject areas and not limited to Social Studies. Indian language instruction should be included as part of the regular K-12 curriculum.

A number of other program initiatives are needed:

- The concept of family should be taught in school as well as in the home. In addition, parents need to be educated about schooling in order to provide better learning environments for their children.
- A more basic education is needed. Reading, Writing, and Mathematics should be stressed in the curriculum, and more structure should be provided. Self-pacing and the provision of class options are not benefiting Indian and Metis students.
- There is a need for quality work experience programs in schools. The few programs that do exist do not consider the untapped potential of the students they serve. Work programs within the school have the potential of benefiting the entire student population.
- Indian and Metis traditions and point of view should be considered in the curriculum from both an historical and a contemporary perspective. This would contribute to healthy self concept development among Indian and Metis students. The concepts of sharing and co-operation as fundamentals of Indian and Metis culture should be a focal point.
- Nutrition programs, including snack programs and nutrition planning, should be included in the curriculum. Groups identified social and economic

"Native content is important. It creates awareness. Teachers must know a lot about it so it isn't too historical or stereotyped."

"The grassroots people are asking for training and materials in the Cree language."

"We support the back to basics way. We are unsure of the self-pacing way. We feel lazy kids wouldn't do so good."

"Deal with why Natives can't make it in the system, don't take them out of it."

"Re-educate Indians on their own culture so they know that they are not all dirty drunks. We are far from the Native children being proud of their background."

problems as contributing to the numbers of hungry Indian and Metis students in the schools.

- By providing life skills programs as part of the regular curriculum, schools could reduce the need for special programs.
- The concept of survival schools must be dealt with. Consensus is lacking among the organizations about the value of alternative schools for Indian and Metis students. Some groups were of the opinion that the system must be changed to accommodate the unique needs of Indian and Metis students and that students should not be removed from the mainstream and placed into separate schools. Other groups felt alternative or separate schools are necessary because of the failure of existing programs to ensure the educational success of Indian and Metis students.
- Resource materials for Indian and Metis education are currently inadequate. Related areas of need include tutoring and counselling resources outside the school, funding for resource materials, and a clearinghouse for materials.
- Groups expressed concern that culturally biased standardized testing is used in the school system and has a negative impact on student placement and performance.
- Preschool education programs were identified as a necessity for successful Indian and Metis education development.
- Special programming for youths who have children of their own was a need expressed by groups.
- The groups identified K-12 tutorial programming for Indian and Metis students as a definite need. Teachers do not always have time to assist students, and are sometimes unaware of their needs.
- The community schools concept should be expanded and improved. Indian and Metis parent involvement in community schools is required to make this vital program work.

2. Teacher Education

Most of the groups and organizations specified teacher education as a major issue. In particular, two areas of teacher education were addressed:

Cross-Cultural Education

Cross-cultural teacher education should be mandatory at the university level. Cross-cultural inservice training, particularly with respect to cultural differences

"Broaden life skills areas. Then there wouldn't be a need for places like Cornwall Tutoring Centre."

"Segregate so we can integrate. Once armored with inner strength, we can now return to meet power and can now integrate."

"Separate schools are not the answer. We must learn to integrate sometime."

"Testing is invalid. The word on the test, 'escalator', in the North doesn't apply and penalizes children."

"Support the adult programs. By supporting them, you benefit the children."

"Tutorial programs are also needed in the high school setting."

"Racism and cross-cultural classes should be compulsory for teachers, and they should teach about racism and stereotyping right from preschool."

between Native and non-Native peoples, was recommended. Inservice on Indian and Metis history was also recommended and should be combined with inservice on contemporary Indian and Metis issues.

The concept of the extended family needs to be recognized by teachers as an aspect of cultural difference between Indian and Metis and non-Native people. Cultural differences such as this need to be accepted, tolerated, and genuinely appreciated by teachers.

Teachers tend to have lower expectations of Indian and Metis students. Problems such as racism and the negative attitudes of non-Native teachers has had an adverse affect on the achievement of Indian and Metis students.

Native Teacher Education

Support for Native teacher education programs and their interns and graduates is lacking in the education community, particularly among non-Native teachers. Programs such as SUNTEP and NORTEP were viewed by groups as excellent programs, and support from all levels of the education system should be extended.

3. Parent Involvement

Many groups felt Indian and Metis parents and organizations should be involved in schooling. They saw this involvement as essential to the development and success of Indian and Metis education.

The current lack of parent involvement was seen by the organizations as resulting from a problem in communication between schools, boards, and Indian and Metis parents. According to the organizations, barriers at the school board level are created, at least in part, by the lack of Indian and Metis representation at the board level. Such representation was seen as crucial to the success of Indian and Metis students. It was suggested that Indian and Metis advisors or advisory councils be elected by Indian and Metis people and appointed to school boards.

Home-school liaisons, home visits, and parent awareness classes were seen as ways to alleviate communication problems. To encourage parental involvement in schools, schools must convince Indian and Metis parents that they can approach the school for positive reasons, and not only negative. The establishment of a Native parents' committee would be a way of opening communication, provided parents' suggestions are treated as valid.

"The teacher training program must be revamped. Teachers say they don't counsel. I teach and I counsel."

"Look at teacher education. Cross-cultural and Native Studies are needed so teachers will be able to deal with Native students effectively."

"Native teachers are important for communication."

"Communication between parents and school is a need. Have home visits to build trust, not only when problems arise though. Encourage parents to come and see what education is all about and free teachers to do these visits."

"We can change on paper but we must move to change attitudes. We want to be involved. We want to be treated as equals."

"Education has to come from both sides. Communication is very important."

Families expect more from the school and education professionals than is presently being provided. Measures to correct the problems are required immediately.

4. Positive Role Models

Positive role models in the school are essential to the success of Indian and Metis students. In particular, the following positions were identified:

Indian and Metis Teachers

More Indian and Metis teachers in classrooms are necessary in order to meet the needs of Indian and Metis students. SUNTEP and NORTEP are excellent programs for training Native teachers.

Community School Co-ordinators

The Community School Co-ordinator positions should be filled by Indian and Metis people from the local communities. The groups and organizations regarded these people as key role models.

Indian and Metis Teacher Associates

Teacher associates should be given responsibilities and not be used only as clerical assistants. By placing these Indian and Metis teacher associates in meaningful roles, schools ensure that they have a positive impact as role models for Indian and Metis students.

Indian and Metis Counsellors

The employment of Indian and Metis counsellors for career guidance, personal counselling, and home-school liaison is necessary for the development of Indian and Metis education.

5. Socio-Economic Problems

Many organizations mentioned socio-economic problems as having a direct and adverse affect on the educational achievement of Indian and Metis students. Employment opportunities must exist for graduates. The absence of employment opportunities for Indian and Metis people deters students from achieving in the school system.

"How can you tell me about my child when you haven't lived on the reserve?"

"We need more Native teachers in the school. Fifty percent Native and fifty percent non-Native teachers is what we support."

"The teacher associates in our school tend to be used as golfers."

"Native counsellors are important so students can relate to them more easily."

"Due to the economy, parents cannot supply all of the experiences needed to succeed in school."

Incentive programs for adult education would motivate more Indian and Metis people to improve their education.

6. Interagency Daycare

Daycare should be an interagency responsibility, especially involving Social Services and the Department of Education.

7. Bussing

Inflexible bussing schedules in transporting Indian children from reserves to schools prohibits these children from participating in after-school activities. This detracts from the students' sense of belonging and inhibits interaction among all students.

8. Long-Term Solutions

Long-term solutions need to be developed in Indian and Metis education. Indian control of education was seen as a long-term solution by at least one organization.

Summary of Groups' and Organizations' Comments

Groups and organizations emphasized that the low success rate of Indian and Metis students is devastating. They attributed it to a variety of factors, including the lack of communication between the school and the home, the lack of involvement of Indian and Metis people in the education system, poor socio-economic conditions, and the insensitivity of the education system to the needs of the Indian and Metis students and their home situations.

Strategies to promote communication and Indian and Metis involvement were recommended. Economic development programs to enable students to cope were also seen as necessary.

The groups saw curriculum development and program planning with long-term objectives as essential to future development in

"Education must be recognized as important and the only way to advance. Reserves are dead end job-wise, and education is better than social assistance."

Indian and Metis education. Improvements in the education of teachers and changes in hiring practices were suggested. Teachers who are most able to benefit Indian and Metis students should be given preference when teaching positions are being filled.

List of Groups' and Organizations' Recommendations

1. Develop programs to suit the needs and aspirations of Indian and Metis students.
2. Incorporate Indian and Metis culture and content into the provincial K-12 curriculum in all subject areas.
3. Make Indian language instruction a part of the core curriculum.

4. Incorporate self concept and self-esteem building into the regular provincial curriculum.
5. Stress the basic academics in curriculum, and provide structure instead of self-pacing and choice.
6. Implement K-12 tutorial classes.
7. Incorporate more work experience programs in the curriculum.
8. Make nutrition programming a part of the curriculum, especially in areas of need.
9. Incorporate life skills and modern survival skills into the regular system.
10. Deal with racism by teaching about prejudice and stereotyping in the curriculum.
11. Establish a clearinghouse for developing, cataloguing, and distributing resource materials to schools and teachers.
12. Discard culturally biased tests and develop valid tests for Indian and Metis students.
13. Involve both home and school in the development and teaching of the concept of families.
14. Take steps to educate parents about the value of education and their role in the education system.
15. Develop incentive programs in adult education to help Native peoples build pride and self-esteem.
16. Provide incentives or jobs so that Indian and Metis students are motivated to finish school.
17. Use affirmative action to provide Indian and Metis role models for Indian and Metis students.
18. Make pre-service and inservice in cross-cultural education and Native Studies mandatory for teachers.
19. Encourage all levels of education to support Native teacher training programs like SUNTEP and NORTEP.
20. Recognize teachers for their work in curriculum development.
21. Recognize teachers who teach on reserves so as to encourage good quality teachers to apply.
22. Hire Indian and Metis teachers in order to help meet student needs.
23. Provide Indian and Metis counsellors for personal guidance and career guidance so that Indian and Metis students have someone they can easily relate to.
24. Hire Indian and Metis community counsellors.
25. Employ Indian and Metis liaison workers to ensure open communication lines from home to school.
26. Hire Indian and Metis people in other roles in the system to provide positive role models for the students.
27. Ensure that Indian and Metis parents have more input into their children's education.
28. Establish Indian and Metis parent committees.
29. Improve communication between all levels of the education system.
30. Develop approaches to get Indian and Metis representation on school boards.
31. Use community resources whenever they are available.
32. Implement preschool or early intervention programs to try to prevent frustration and dropping out later on.
33. Establish 24-hour daycare services.
34. Make daycare a service co-ordinated by Social Services and the Department of Education.
35. Establish urban Native elementary schools.
36. Expand and improve upon the Community schools concept.
37. Make alternative education available where there is a need.
38. Improve reserve bussing services.
39. Incorporate long-term planning in addition to developing short-term solutions.
40. Establish on-going and consistent ways of accommodating student needs.
41. Ensure that this is report is not an academic exercise, and that it be used to bring about changes in Indian and Metis education.

Chapter III

Conclusions and Recommendations

Directions. the final report of the Curriculum and Instruction Review Committee, ended by asking that "the people of the province rally to meet the challenge of educating for an exciting but uncertain future." The issues and concerns outlined in this report, **Reaching Out**, present additional challenges that will certainly be difficult to meet. But if these challenges are met, Indian and Metis children will also be able to face the future with skills and confidence.

There are four general options to be considered. First, the Federal Government could be called upon to expand programs already existing under its jurisdiction for Status and Treaty Indians. In addition, the Federal Government could be asked to extend its commitment to non-status Indian and Metis people, either directly or by providing funding for programs to be directed by the Province or by Indian and Metis people themselves. Such a plan of action might also include the securing of funds from other non-governmental sources. Adoption of this option would most likely lead to an Indian and Metis education system that is independent of the provincial system, both administratively and financially.

Secondly, the Government of Saskatchewan could establish separate Indian and Metis school boards in areas of significant Indian and Metis populations. At present, provincial legislation allows for separate boards based on religious affiliation only (Education Act, Section 20 and 22). Adoption of this option would necessitate legislative action and considerable financial commitment.

As a third option, private schools run by Indian and Metis people could be established. At present, private schools may be established at any level from Kindergarten to Grade 12 as long as the governing body of each school submits required information to the Department of Education. The school must be open to inspection by the department, the school's program must follow subjects or courses of study authorized by the Education Act, and the school's program must be deemed adequate by the superintendent/director of education concerned. Private high schools are eligible for operating and capital grants, but only if the school has been in operation for five years and

complies with other requirements stipulated in the Regulations [subsection 46.1(3)].

The fourth option, and the one advocated in this report, calls on the existing education system to change in order to better meet the needs of Indian and Metis children. This course of action is recommended for a number of reasons.

During the Consultations, an air of good will was consistently found among parents, educators, and others. These people were anxious to get on with the job of properly educating Indian and Metis children within the existing system. The majority of the presentations, recommendations and comments made during the Consultations assume that the responsibility for the educational success of Indian and Metis children is a shared responsibility. The complexity of the problems demands a united and concerted effort on the part of all those concerned: parents, community members, boards, organizations, political groups, education professionals, the Department of Education and students. The desire exists. There remains for all parties to reach out to one another, to understand one another, and to work together.

There are a number of factors which make improving the existing system more feasible than establishing a separate system. A separate Indian and Metis education system would not have access to all the resources available in the province, nor would it be able to easily share its resources and skills with the public system. The funding that is available is limited. These limited funds can be most effectively and efficiently used in conjunction with existing funds and programs.

The economic, social, and political situation in the province would make the establishment of a separate Indian and Metis education system a difficult goal to attain. The time, money, the energy, and effort that would be required to reach the goal could instead be put to use immediately in improving the existing system. The children would be direct beneficiaries of these efforts, and would not have to wait for the uncertain results of a time-consuming campaign.

Improving the existing system, then, should become an immediate goal for all concerned. There are several principles that should guide attempts to provide Indian and Metis children with the opportunity to reach their full potential in our schools:

1. Indian and Metis people must be given the opportunity to participate fully in the education system at all levels, from the school to the Department of Education. This would ensure that programs are consistent with the aspirations of Indian and Metis people and meet the needs of their children.
2. The education system must recognize that Indian and Metis students are the children of peoples whose cultures are, in many ways, very different from those of the people who established the school system. These differences, which may include learning styles, language, and world-view, must be accounted for in curriculum, programs, teaching methods, and climate in the schools attended by Indian and Metis children.
3. There must be co-operation and consultation among all federal, provincial, local, and Indian and Metis authorities to ensure co-ordination of efforts to meet the needs of Indian and Metis people.
4. Efforts to improve the success of Indian and Metis students in school must begin at the school-community level. Principals, teachers, aides, and parents must be aware of the issues that need to be addressed and must work together for the good of the children. No longer can school personnel assume that special education or remedial programs will suffice. No longer can blame be put on uncaring parents, or expectations be lowered simply because a child is Indian, Metis, or poor. No longer can parents blame an uncaring system or school. Schools and communities must work together and find new ways to succeed.

Over and over again during the Consultations, people spoke of the need to improve communication between Indian and Metis people and the schools, and of the need for Native peoples to have more input into what is being taught in the schools their children attend. It became obvious that the schools themselves must be the key unit in any attempt to improve Indian and Metis education.

The theme "reaching out" was chosen for this report because the schools and Indian and Metis parents repeatedly said that, although they wanted to work together, they very often were not. It is time for initiatives to be taken. It is time for reaching out by

both educators and Indian and Metis people. It is time to establish a process of working together. This process should begin at the school and community level since it is at that level that most of the positive impact must be felt.

Findings from the Consultations were organized into categories, and 29 recommendations were formulated. A complete list of recommendations can be found in Appendix B. In this final chapter of the report, the recommendations are presented under the following headings: School Level Initiatives, Parental and Community Support, Organizational Support, Policy, Employment, Training of Educators, Curriculum Development, Indian and Metis Involvement, Continuing Initiatives, Student Evaluation, Student Mobility and Attendance, Northern Issues, and Federal-Provincial Relations.

School Level Initiatives

Schools are in the best position to take the initiative in "reaching out". There are many steps that can be taken using existing resources and materials. What is immediately required is a commitment to opening schools to the Indian and Metis community. The first attempts may not bring immediate success, but if a school honestly and continuously reaches out, the results for children will undoubtedly be positive.

Recommendation 1:

That each school re-assess the adequacy of its programs and activities aimed at: 1) maintaining a school environment which is a positive reflection of Indian and Metis culture and history, and 2) encouraging Indian and Metis parents to become involved in school activities.

If a school wants Indian and Metis parents to be involved in its programs, the school must show that desire in the way it presents itself to the community. The school must make parents welcome and project a sense of commitment and pride in the community. Listed below are some initiatives that schools can take now. There are many more possibilities.

School Environment Projects

- Display historical and contemporary art depicting Indian and Metis lifestyles and pursuits.
- Display students' work depicting pride in their heritage.
- Begin a school-wide project to develop school spirit. The project could focus on pride in the various ethnic backgrounds of students, or pride in past and present achievements of students, staff, parents, and community.
- Display welcome signs, at entrances to the school. Tell the public what is happening in the school and display school and community achievements.
- Encourage teachers to send children to visit the principal during the day to display work and receive praise.
- Hold relay races and the like where teams made up of a mix of teachers and students compete. This helps create a sense of community.
- Ensure that awards and praise are handed out for group efforts (classes, grade levels, teams, etc.) as much as for individual efforts.
- Use Indian languages on posters, signs, and perhaps even notices sent home from the school, even if use of the Indian language is uncommon in the area. This demonstrates a commitment to Indian and Metis culture and may open doors for communication. Dialogue with elders in particular may be initiated when schools seek their help in ensuring the accuracy of the language used.
- Publicize school efforts and successes and give credit to combined efforts (school and parents) as often as possible.
- Older Indian and Metis children are often expected to care for their younger siblings. Schools can have older children read to younger children, listen to them read, explain to them about school spirit or school procedures, and so on. In this way, the values of the home are extended to the child's life at school, creating a more supportive atmosphere and the feeling that learning is the shared responsibility of everyone at school.

- Encourage Indian and Metis students to participate in extra-curricular activities. If bussing is a problem, enlist volunteers to help out or begin a fund raising campaign in which the entire school community takes part.
- Schedule cultural activities (powwows, cultural mosaic days, etc.) as a regular part of the school year. Involve the whole community.
- Hold a school/community heritage day or week. Have the students research the school's and community's past (famous people, events, family trees, weather patterns, economic changes, etc.) and exhibit their projects throughout the school and the community.
- Ask parents and grand parents for information and pictures. If a school serves a reserve and a separate community, the interdependence of the two can be used as a theme for a research project.
- Examine the difference between the school's "culture" and that of the Indian and Metis students in an effort to bring the two into closer harmony and to help all members of the school community to understand one another better. Some particular aspects that could be examined include: respect for the individual, teaching methodologies, social interaction, personalizing the school, how new students are helped to adjust to the school, and how meetings are conducted with Indian and Metis people.

Getting Parents Involved

- Hold "open house" days 2 or 3 times during the year during which parents are invited to come to the school to watch a typical day. No interviews should be held. Parents can simply come to the classroom, sit at the back, and watch what happens. The turnout will likely be small at first, but if no pressure is put on the parents during these days (for example, complaints about attendance or school work) the numbers will grow, as will appreciation for what is going on in the school. Be prepared to accept some noise from preschool siblings.

- At any parent or community event, make sure the school is full of displays of children's work. If there are projects relating to Indian and Metis cultures and languages, have them displayed throughout the school, not in a "special" place.
- Check with people to see if transportation to and from the school is a problem. If so, organize a car pool or get volunteers to help transport people. Projects such as this bring adults together for a common cause -- the education of their children.
- Some parents, particularly single parents, may have problems coming to events because of babysitting difficulties. Turn one room into a mini daycare centre run by older students under the direction of adult volunteers. Make sure everyone is aware that the service is available.
- Ask particular parents or adults to come to the school to participate in events. For example, one school asks 2 or 3 different adults (usually parents) to come to the school every second Friday. These adults go from class to class and judge which one is the cleanest, neatest, brightest, etc. that day. They then present an award to the class to be displayed for the next 2 weeks (in this case three leathers). The adults are invited at least a week in advance, and a follow-up is done the day before to make sure they can come. Transportation is provided if necessary. There are numerous other examples of when parents can be asked to come in to do one specific task (hand out an award, help to make soup, watch a class play, take the president of the Student Council to the bank, etc.).
- If awards are being presented, contact the parents of the winners personally and invite them to come to watch the presentations. Principals should take advantage of this as much as possible. It is a new experience for many parents to have the principal call or visit to say something positive about their children.
- Whenever there is an event at school which parents attend, have coffee, tea, and cookies available in a central place. This gives people a chance to visit with each other and produces good feelings about the place. Don't make this a chance to "catch people you want to talk to." It should be a place for visiting. Staff should drop in when the opportunity arises.
- Consciously strive to make parent-teacher days and evenings good experiences. Always start and end interviews on a positive note. This suggestion is hardly new, but it is of extreme importance to schools with Indian and Metis students. Most Indian and Metis parents do not have fond memories of school and approach these interviews with reluctance, expecting bad news. If instead they learn they can leave parent-teacher interviews feeling good about their children, they will feel good about the school and convey this to their children and to others in the community.
- Hold a well publicized information evening within the first two weeks of school. Begin in the gym or some central place with short speeches by the principal and a few other appropriate people (Band Chief, local board member, etc.). These speeches should highlight the role of parents and the community. Parents can then go to their children's classrooms, where the teacher can briefly outline the year's program, special rules, and so on. End with an informal coffee time in a relaxed area.
- Sometime after the information evening, send out requests for volunteers to help in the school. Name areas where help is needed, and list the expectations for specific volunteer jobs. Ask people to let the school know about skills or knowledge they may have and are willing to share with the students. Be sure to reply to every offer of help, even if only to say the offer cannot be accepted at the present time. Use at least some of the volunteers and make them feel part of the school community. Be sure to thank all those who offer assistance.
- If the practice has been to send the report cards home and then hold parent-teacher interviews, change the procedure to one in which parents come to the school to pick up the report cards from the teacher.
- If you want people to feel free to come to you, then you should open the doors by going to them. If a school serves a reserve, parent-teacher interviews could be held on the reserve with the co-operation of the reserve leaders. School events such as plays, sports days, or the like could take place at the reserve once or twice a year. Individual classes can go to the reserve to learn skills or concepts from people there. A professional development activity could take place on a reserve, either sponsored by the band or including

band members. The activity need not be directly related to Indian and Metis cultures; Indian people are interested in how to help children read as well.

- Schools can hold regular staff-reserve meetings on the reserve to discuss general or specific issues.
- Going out to the Indian and Metis people in an urban environment is somewhat more difficult, but well worth the extra effort. Teachers and principals can still make home visits. In some areas, a particular church might draw a large number of Indian and Metis people. Often arrangements can be made to have staff members address the congregation. The church hall and its publicity mechanisms can be used to present a school activity to the community.
- Inform the local news media (newspapers, radio, T.V.) about exciting events taking place in the school. The media can help spread the word that the school wants parents to visit and to participate in the life of the school.
- Use resource people from the Indian and Metis community as role models for the students. Ask Indian and Metis business people, teachers, doctors, firemen, truck drivers, and so on to speak to the children about their jobs. Ask elders to speak about the old ways, current issues, and their views about today's world.
- Teachers can ask particular parents for help in some small way ("Brenda tells me that you have a picture of a very old fire engine. Could you bring it in to show the children, or lend it to us for a few days?") Then thank the person no matter what the response. A positive contact has been made.
- Classrooms or grade levels can hold luncheons at which students serve their parents food they have prepared. Student work can be displayed. This is one way working people can be given an opportunity to see the school during the day.
- Christmas concerts and spring concerts in which all the children participate are tremendous crowd pleasers.
- Send out a school newsletter that contains children's work and stories about the school. Include a list of upcoming events and invitations to visit the school. Hold a contest,

open to parents, to decide on the name of the newsletter. Highlight the need for two-way communications.

- Take time in a staff meeting or set aside some other appropriate time to brainstorm ways of including parents in the school program.
- Use the Indian Cultural College as a valuable source of resources (material and human).
- Establish attendance awards, both group and individual.
- In some schools, it may be possible to establish a "buddy" system to help improve attendance or decrease tardiness.
- Hold essay, art, or other contests on Native-specific topics. Classrooms or individuals could submit. Invite parental submissions for some contests.
- Student exchange programs (North-South, rural-urban) may be possible. Billeting at homes breaks down stereotyping and leads to understanding.
- Field trips to another school or with another school offer opportunities to overcome prejudices and learn respect for one another. Canoe trips or camping trips are possibilities.
- Use Indian and Metis people as resource people in core areas (as tutors or listeners in the reading program, for example). Indian and Metis parents should not be seen as resources for only Native-specific programs, or as helpers for only Indian and Metis children. It is very important that non-Native children have contact with these volunteers.
- Contact local Indian and Metis organizations and leaders. Let them know the school is working toward more community involvement and ask for their help in letting the community know. Keep in touch with them personally, or by regular letter or newsletter. Some key people or groups include the following: Friendship Centres, SIFC, AMNSIS, FSIN, band chiefs, band councils, teacher education programs, Gabriel Dumont Institute, and local ministers and priests.

The key is to reach out in a sincere and open manner. It may take time to overcome years of separation and more than a few attempts to bring about participation, but the results will be well worth the effort. In the end, it is the students who will benefit.

Parents and Community Support

Although this Report calls on the schools to take the initiative in reaching out, Indian and Metis parents and communities must also begin to reach out to the schools, and should respond to initiatives made by them in a positive manner.

Recommendation 2:

That each Indian and Metis parent and community initiate contact with the schools as well as respond in a positive way to initiatives made by the schools.

Parents can reach out to the schools in the following ways:

- Make every effort to attend school functions. If it is impossible to attend, phone or send a note to the teacher or school and pass on regrets. Set up alternate dates with the teachers.
- Make contact with the teacher early in the school year by phone, letter, or visit. Let the teacher know you are pleased that your child is in his or her classroom and that you will be willing to work co-operatively. Explain any factors that may make contact difficult (work schedule, smaller children, etc.).
- Talk to your children daily about what they are doing in school. If you are interested in their education, the children will be interested in succeeding.
- If you have the time, volunteer to help out. If you have specific skills, talents, or knowledge that you can share, let the teacher know. If there is no response, let the principal know you are willing to help and haven't been asked yet.
- When something you like happens at the school, let the teachers and principal know by phone or note. Too often home and school communications are about problems. People like a pat on the back.
- Encourage a sense of pride in the school by letting your children know that you are proud of them and their accomplishments as members of the school community.

Organizational Support

Although the most important work must be done at the local level, there are some essential steps to be taken by the larger partners in the education system. There is a need for leadership in beginning the process of "reaching out" and responsibility must be taken to see that Indian and Metis involvement in the education system grows to an acceptable level.

Recommendation 3:

That Indian and Metis organizations take a leadership role in the development and implementation of programs designed to actively involve parents with their children's teachers, school administrators, and the school system in general.

Recommendation 4:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Indian and Metis Education Development Program (IMED), to which schools can apply for assistance when setting up programs designed to increase Indian and Metis home-school liaison.

To ensure that such programs are viable, it is recommended that each application for funds must demonstrate that the proposed project is a joint effort of the school and the Indian and Metis community, and that planning for the project has been a joint effort. In this way, schools and Indian and Metis people will be prompted to reach out to each other to begin a process that will bring rewards.

Policy

The Indian and Metis Education Consultations has demonstrated the need for Saskatchewan Education to continue to provide leadership in recognizing and addressing the educational needs of Indian and Metis people.

Policy which deliberately addresses Indian and Metis education issues, rather than subsuming them under such headings as "Special Education," "Remediation," and "Individualized Progress," will serve to focus the attention of educators and others on the need for programs in Indian and Metis education. Policy will also provide the direction and leadership needed for the design and implementation of successful programs.

Research shows a strong support for a policy mandate for special needs children. It pointed out that, when policy is clear, the targeted children are more likely to receive the services they need. Eventually, taking these children's needs into account becomes the rule rather than the exception.

The new Canadian Constitution, by recognizing that the aboriginal peoples of the country have a unique status and possess special rights, provides a further rationale for the design of policy that deals with the special educational needs of the province's Indian and Metis people.

Policies establishing special programs for other special needs students and groups within the province already exist, and have been shown to benefit those students. The Indian and Metis Education Consultations lend support to the recommendation made in the **Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development** that policy dealing with Indian and Metis education be developed. It is of vital importance that all parties have the opportunity for input into the development of such a policy.

Recommendation 5:

That the Minister of Education propose the policy statement included in this report as the basis for a policy that should be in place by the end of 1985.

Proposed Policy Statement For Indian and Metis Education

Saskatchewan Education recognizes that the Indian and Metis people of the province are historically unique peoples and occupy a unique place in our society today. Saskatchewan

Education also recognizes that special programs and considerations are important to provide for the educational needs of Indian and Metis people.

Objectives:

- 1) To meet the short-term and long-term educational needs of Indian and Metis people.
- 2) To provide direction and leadership in the development and implementation of Indian and Metis education programs which meet the needs of urban, rural, and Northern Indian and Metis people.
- 3) To establish processes by which Indian and Metis people can become directly involved in the decision-making which determines educational programs in the province.
- 4) To ensure that all curricula and materials present Indian and Metis people accurately in historical and modern terms, and that Native-oriented materials and concepts are a part of all subject areas.

Definition:

The policy and programs set out in this statement refer only to Indian and Metis children who are enrolled in schools under the jurisdiction of the Province of Saskatchewan. It is not to be implied that the Government of Saskatchewan is in any way assuming the legal and historical obligations that the Government of Canada has to aboriginal people.

Administrative Procedures:

- 1) The Department of Education will, with advice and direction from the Indian and Metis Curriculum Advisory Committee, develop core and special curricula in Indian and Metis education. The **Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development** (March, 1984) will provide the framework for the development and implementation of these curricula.
- 2) The Department of Education will work with the boards of education, teacher training institutions, and the

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation to assist Indian and Metis people in becoming professional educators at all levels and to develop a human resources strategy which will allow for special consideration to be given to Indian and Metis professionals in areas and schools with significant Indian and Metis populations.

- 3) The Department of Education will work with the boards of education and Indian and Metis organizations to provide the means for Indian and Metis people to influence the education system at all levels.

Employment

The Department of Education should ensure that programs aimed at improving Indian and Metis education in the province also provide opportunities for the permanent employment of Indian and Metis people whenever possible. This will not only help alleviate the high unemployment rate among Native peoples, but will also provide for meaningful, permanent input into the education process, and provide role models for young people within the system.

Recommendation 6:

That an Indian and Metis human resource utilization strategy should be implemented by the education authorities which serve as employers of education professionals.

This strategy should include the provision of opportunities for trained Indian and Metis professionals to be appointed to teaching, guidance, administrative, and other positions in areas with significant Indian and Metis populations. The Department of Education in conjunction with the Human Rights Commission should devise a means for boards of education to adopt and utilize such a human resource strategy.

Training of Educators

Recommendation 7:

That the Department of Education continue to provide support to teacher training institutions whose primary goal is to produce qualified Indian and Metis Education professionals.

Recommendation 8:

That the Department of Education, in conjunction with the teacher training institutions of the province, examine the programs offered for Native peoples to ensure that the skills and abilities taught will enable graduates to be employed.

In particular, Indian and Metis people should have the opportunity to be trained as counsellors, curriculum developers, and Indian language instructors.

Recommendation 9:

That teacher training institutions place greater emphasis on cross-cultural education as an integral part of the courses offered at all levels.

For example, courses in teaching methods, curriculum development, school administration, and so on should all contain substantial cross-cultural components.

Recommendation 10:

That the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and school boards ensure that educators have the opportunity to participate in inservice and professional development activities in cross-cultural education.

Curriculum Development

The consultation process indicated that Indian and Metis curriculum development is a high priority issue among all groups. At the provincial level, the Department of Education has already demonstrated leadership by adoption of *The Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development* and the establishment of the Indian and Metis Curriculum Advisory Committee. The Action Plan addresses all the major concerns raised during the consultation meetings regarding curriculum.

Recommendation 11:

The Department of Education continue to develop core and special curricula following the recommendations of *The Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development*.

Language Arts programs are of special concern in the education of Indian and Metis children.

Recommendation 12:

That the Department of Education, during its present review of language arts programs, ensure that Native-oriented materials become an integral part of the Core Curriculum, as is recommended in *The Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development*.

Recommendation 13:

That Northern school boards develop and/or determine methodologies, texts, and other materials which are appropriate for the many rural and Northern Indian and Metis students who speak English as a Second Language/Dialect.

Recommendation 14:

That the urban school boards concerned, design and implement a program that will (1) identify Indian and Metis children who enter school without the English language skills necessary to succeed in school, (2) identify each child's particular needs, and (3) provide the necessary special programming and materials that will enable each child to acquire the needed skills during the Kindergarten year.

Recommendation 15:

That the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and school boards work together to provide teachers and administrators with the professional development needed to implement the programs described in Recommendation 14.

Of particular concern to Northern educators was the lack of accessibility of locally relevant materials despite the development of these materials in various areas.

Recommendation 16:

That the Northern school divisions make contact with other Northern education jurisdictions (for example, Northwest Territories Department of Education or Frontier School Division in Manitoba) to devise a means of sharing relevant Northern materials and making them available to educators. It is also recommended that a resource centre be established to collect, assess, and make available to teachers materials that are appropriate to the North.

Materials related to particular historical, geographical, and social aspects of different areas of the province are needed. These

materials would greatly benefit teachers and students who are studying their own local history and culture.

Recommendation 17:

That the Department of Education support the local development and production of materials that relate to the unique aspects of particular localities. These materials should also be obtained by the department as a potential source of materials for province-wide utilization.

Indian and Metis Involvement

The direct participation of parents in the education of their children improves academic achievement and is of great benefit to children, schools, and communities. Increased involvement of Indian and Metis parents is needed in both rural and urban centers, and in the North.

Recommendation 18:

That all levels of the education system provide opportunities for Indian and Metis people to become directly involved in the planning and implementation of education programs for their children.

Recommendation 19:

That all urban schools with a substantial Indian and Metis student population institute an on-going program designed to increase parental (particularly Indian and Metis) involvement in the school.

The program should include: (1) the service of a special liaison person ideally of Indian or Metis descent charged with the task

of establishing contact with parents, and (2) a Parents' Council with a number of seats reserved for Indian and Metis parents. These Parents' Councils should make regular reports to their respective boards of education, including recommendations to improve or develop programs for Indian and Metis students.

Recommendation 20:

That reserves near rural school divisions be encouraged to take advantage of Section 27(2)(b) of The Education Act and be designated as sub-divisions so that they may have representatives on their respective Boards of Education.

If an Indian Reserve does not elect to become a sub-division, it may wish to appoint a member to the board of trustees of the school district. This may be accomplished under Section 124(1.1) of the Education Act.

Programs designed to increase the participation of Northern Indian and Metis people should also be implemented. The Indian and Metis Education Consultations demonstrated that the North has unique problems that can only be solved with the direct participation of the Indian and Metis people of the region.

Continuing Initiatives

The Department of Education, most boards of education, and most schools already have programs in place which are affecting the education of Indian and Metis children in positive ways. These programs should be continued and extended.

Recommendation 21:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Community Schools Program.

Recommendation 22:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Saskatoon Native Survival School and provide leadership in establishing other programs that provide successful alternative methods of educating Native peoples within the existing administrative structures.

Any such alternative programs should comply with the following general guidelines:

- 1) The stated goals of the program should include improving attendance, retention, and academic progress among Indian and Metis students.
- 2) All aspects of the program should provide for direct parental and Indian and Metis community participation.
- 3) The program should provide additional permanent employment opportunities for Indian and Metis people.

Student Evaluation

During the Consultations, difficulties arose concerning the assessment of the academic progress of Indian and Metis students. There is a tendency to place Indian and Metis students in Special Education programs as a result of their performance on standardized tests. The most easily available and most often used standardized tests suffer from cultural bias and language problems. The results, therefore, are questionable when the tests are used with Indian and Metis students. In addition, provincial policy states that more than just test results should be used when placing students in Special Education programs. Despite this, a disproportionate number of Indian and Metis students were reported to be in these programs.

Recommendation 23:

That the Department of Education and the school divisions ensure that any Indian or Metis student placed in a special education program has been very carefully assessed as needing special education.

Recommendation 24:

That the Department of Education and the school divisions take steps to train those professionals who are responsible for testing and evaluation in the issues relating to testing Indian and Metis children.

Student Mobility and Attendance

High mobility rates and relatively low attendance rates among Indian and Metis students present special problems for educators. However, they must not be seen as excuses for not attempting to teach these students effectively. Mobility and attendance are problems that can be addressed by programming and instruction. The continued development of Indian and Metis curricula and programs, increased numbers of Indian and Metis education professionals, and cross-cultural training and professional development for teachers will improve attendance by contributing to a more supportive school environment for Indian and Metis students.

Some of the causes of the high mobility rate found among Indian and Metis students cannot be eliminated by the education system. However, the programs and ideas presented in this report can address problems caused by mobility, including alienation, poor self-image, and racial conflict. Such programs can have positive effects on students. It is also important that the schools take preventative action for the students who do move often and are likely to drop out of school.

Recommendation 25:

That programs providing support to students who are most likely to quit school be implemented in all schools. As well, programs and methods should be developed to encourage and ease the return of dropouts to school.

The development of a modular approach to teaching and programming might also help both teachers and students by

providing the flexibility and adaptability needed by students who move or who do not attend school for substantial periods of time.

Recommendation 26:

That boards ensure that the records of students who have a history of transiency or truancy are up-to-date and, most importantly, contain the information needed to adequately program for the student.

The transfer of these records from one school to another should be facilitated by clear board directive. Some jurisdictions have employed a "transient student co-ordinating officer" whose tasks include ensuring that records follow a student from school to school, keeping up-to-date statistics on transiency, and generally helping schools and teachers keep track of students and their programs. It is recommended that boards consider establishing such a position where necessary.

Schools which have a high mobility rate among students should have a guidance program to address the particular needs of students who move often. Such a program could help prevent transiency and could provide assistance for students who have no choice but to move often. The program should be an inter-school program to best meet the needs of the mobile student.

Northern Issues

Issues that are specific to Saskatchewan's Northern region became clear during the Consultations. Recommendations in other parts of this report have already dealt with some of the concerns raised by Northerners. Presented here are two further recommendations that deal with issues specific to the North.

Recommendation 27:

That a program designed to help students make the transition from the North to an urban centre be developed and implemented in all schools in the North.

The need for such a program was raised by parents and educators in the North, and by those educators who serve Indian and Metis students who have moved from the North to urban areas. The Northern Education Opportunities Grant program may serve as a vehicle for funding this program initiative.

Recommendation 28:

That the Minister establish a mechanism for a review of the organization and delivery of education services in the North.

The Northern Lights School Division has been operating with its present administrative system for over 10 years. During that time, many changes have occurred in the North and there is a growing demand by Indian and Metis people for more involvement in the education system and more representation in decision-making processes. Some Northerners indicated that the distance between towns and the distance between Northern schools and the Northern Lights School Division office in Prince Albert presented the greatest barriers to the participation of Northerners in the education system.

In the review, the Minister should consider such factors as School Division boundaries, representation of Indian and Metis people and the location of head offices.

Federal-Provincial Relations

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Saskatchewan Education have collaborated successfully to improve the education of Indian and Metis children, and this collaboration should continue and increase wherever possible.

However, recent initiatives by the Federal Government have placed some Status Indian children in a somewhat tenuous position. The Federal Government will not accept responsibility for the education of Status Indian children who live off the reserve.

Recommendation 29:

That the Government of Saskatchewan seek assurance from the Federal Government that tuition will be paid for all Status Indian students attending provincial schools.

Appendix A

Summary of Meetings

Monday, January 16, 1984

Carlyle Elementary School

Teachers and Principals
Board of Education
Parents

Tuesday, January 17, 1984

Broadview School

Teachers and Principals
Trustees and Director
Parents
Students

Sintaluta School

Teachers and Principal
Trustees
Parents

Fort Qu'Appelle

Teachers and Principals
Trustees

Thursday, January 19, 1984

Meeting with Ivy Smith on Headstart Program for Native Children

Tuesday, January 24, 1984

North Battleford

Directors of Education
Connaught School Staff
C.O.C.J. and St. Mary's School Staff
Native Home and School Liaison Program

Wednesday, January 25, 1984

Saskatoon

Saskatchewan Indian Education Commission
Indian Cultural College

Thursday, January 26, 1984

Saskatoon

Saskatoon Public Elementary
Superintendent and Asst. Superintendent
Westmount Staff
Caswell Staff

Native Curriculum Writers
Native Survival School Education Council
SUNTEP — Saskatoon Staff and Students

Friday, January 27, 1984

Saskatoon

Saskatoon R.C.S.S.D. Senior Administrative Staff
St. Mary's School Principal
Saskatoon Public Secondary Superintendent
Nutana Collegiate Staff
Students

Thursday, February 2, 1984

Prince Albert

Prince Albert R.C.S.S.D. No. 6 School Administrators
Boucher Junior High Students
P.A. Catholic School Principals and Staff
Community School Parents
Christopher Lake School
Parents
Staff and Director

Friday, February 3, 1984

Prince Albert

P.A. Carlton Comprehensive High School
Parents
Students
Principal, Guidance Counselor, Superintendent
Pleasantdale School
Students
Parents
Past Students
Staff
Trustee

Thursday, February 9, 1984

Lestock

Lestock School
Students
Parents
Trustees
Teachers
Director and Board of Education

Kamsack

Board of Education, Director

Friday, February 10, 1984

Kamsack

Kamsack School (KCI and Jr. High)
Parents
Teachers and Principal
Native Students
Non-Native Students

Monday, February 13, 1984

Loon Lake

Loon Lake School
Parents
Native Students
Principal and Teachers

Tuesday, February 14, 1984

Canwood

Canwood School Parents
Native Staff
Students

Marcelin

Marcelin School
Parents and Band Council (Muskeg Lake)
Parents and Band Council (Mistawasis)
Students
Staff
Board

Tuesday, February 21, 1984

Prince Albert

NATA Executive
Northern Lights Principal Association

Monday, February 27, 1984

Pinehouse Lake

Parents
Trustees
Students
Teachers

Ile-a-la-Crosse

Teachers
Board of Education
Parents

Tuesday, February 28, 1984

Sandy Bay

Teachers
Trustees
Parents
Students

Cumberland House

Trustees
Students
Teachers

Denare Beach

Creighton

Parents
Students
Teachers
Trustees

Wednesday, February 29, 1984

La Ronge

Northern Branch Staff, NORTEP
La Ronge Native Women
Churchill High School Students
Churchill High School Teachers and Board

Thursday, March 1, 1984

Buffalo Narrows

Students
Teachers
Parents and Trustees

La Loche

Parents
Students
Teachers

Monday, March 5, 1984

Regina

Regina Native Women
In Deo Foundation

Friday, March 30, 1984

Regina

Riel Local #33
Chris Lafontaine

Wednesday, April 4, 1984

Prince Albert

Northern Lights School Board #113
Friendship Centre, Interval House, Native Women
Native Co-ordinating Council

Thursday, April 5, 1984

Prince Albert

Prince Albert School Division #3
Queen Mary Community School
Parents
Staff
Principal

Monday, April 16, 1984

Regina

Gabriel Dumont Institute
Youth Unlimited
The Southeast Area AMNSIS Education Committee

Cornwall Tutoring Centre
Regina Native Team Ministry
Regina School Division #4

Tuesday, April 17, 1984
Punnichy

Students
Board
Teachers
Parents
Gordons Reserve Education Council

Wednesday, April 25, 1984
Saskatoon

Native Outreach
Metis Women

Thursday, June 14, 1984
Regina

Friendship Centre, Native Urban Reception Centre
Saskatchewan Indian Federated College
Indian Native Education Council (AWASIS)

Friday, June 15, 1984
Regina

Regina Catholic School Board #81

Thursday, July 5, 1984
Saskatoon

University of Saskatchewan, INEP, ITEP, SUNTEP

Monday, July 9, 1984
Regina

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
Saskatchewan Native Women's Association
Regina Friendship Centre, Juvenile Assistant Service

Friday, August 3, 1984
Regina

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association

Friday, August 17, 1984
Saskatoon

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation

Appendix B

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1:

That each school re-assess the adequacy of its programs and activities aimed at: 1) maintaining a school environment which is a positive reflection of Indian and Metis culture and history, and 2) encouraging Indian and Metis parents to become involved in school activities.

Recommendation 2:

That each Indian and Metis parent and community initiate contact with the schools as well as respond in a positive way to initiatives made by the schools.

Recommendation 3:

That Indian and Metis organizations take a leadership role in the development and implementation of programs designed to actively involve parents with their children's teachers, school administrators, and the school system in general.

Recommendation 4:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Indian and Metis Education Development Program (IMED), to which schools can apply for assistance when setting up programs designed to increase Indian and Metis home-school liaison.

Recommendation 5: That the Minister of Education propose the policy statement included in this report as the basis for a policy that should be in place by the end of 1985.

Recommendation 6:

That an Indian and Metis human resource utilization strategy should be implemented by the education authorities which serve as employers of education professionals.

Recommendation 7:

That the Department of Education continue to provide support to teacher training institutions whose primary goal is to produce qualified Indian and Metis Education professionals.

Recommendation 8:

That the Department of Education, in conjunction with the teacher training institutions of the province, examine the programs offered for Native peoples to ensure that the skills and abilities taught will enable graduates to be employed.

Recommendation 9:

That teacher training institutions place greater emphasis on cross-cultural education as an integral part of the courses offered at all levels.

Recommendation 10:

That the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and school boards ensure that educators have the opportunity to participate in inservice and professional development activities in cross-cultural education.

Recommendation 11:

The Department of Education continue to develop core and special curricula following the recommendations of **The Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development**.

Recommendation 12:

That the Department of Education, during its present review of language arts programs, ensure that Native-oriented materials become an integral part of the Core Curriculum, as is recommended in **The Five Year Action Plan for Native Curriculum Development**.

Recommendation 13:

That Northern School boards develop and/or determine methodologies, texts, and other materials which are appropriate for the many rural and Northern Indian and Metis students who speak English as a Second Language/Dialect.

Recommendation 14:

That the urban school boards concerned, design and implement a program that will (1) identify Indian and Metis children who enter school without the English language skills necessary to

succeed in school, (2) identify each child's particular needs, and (3) provide the necessary special programming and materials that will enable each child to acquire the needed skills during the Kindergarten year.

Recommendation 15:

That the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation and school boards work together to provide teachers and administrators with the professional development needed to implement the programs described in Recommendation 14.

Recommendation 16:

That the Northern school divisions make contact with other Northern education jurisdictions (for example, Northwest Territories Department of Education or Frontier School Division in Manitoba) to devise a means of sharing relevant Northern materials and making them available to educators. It is also recommended that a resource centre be established to collect, assess, and make available to teachers materials that are appropriate to the North.

Recommendation 17:

That the Department of Education support the local development and production of materials that relate to the unique aspects of particular localities. These materials should also be obtained by the department as a potential source of materials for province-wide utilization.

Recommendation 18:

That all levels of the education system provide opportunities for Indian and Metis people to become directly involved in the planning and implementation of education programs for their children.

Recommendation 19:

That all urban schools with a substantial Indian and Metis student population institute an on-going program designed to increase parental (particularly Indian and Metis) involvement in the school.

Recommendation 20:

That reserves near rural school divisions be encouraged to take advantage of Section 27(2)(b) of The Education Act and be designated as sub-divisions so that they may have representatives on their respective Boards of Education.

Recommendation 21:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Community Schools Program.

Recommendation 22:

That the Department of Education continue to fund the Saskatoon Native Survival School and provide leadership in establishing other programs that provide successful alternative methods of educating Native peoples within the existing administrative structures.

Recommendation 23:

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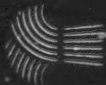
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Saskatchewan
Education



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NORTH
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Education